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DEAR PRESIDENT COOLIDGE: We're getting homesick for our marines—the ones who have been protecting American life and property in Nicaragua for so long. A good many months ago you put us off with talk about an election that couldn't be held peacefully or fairly unless they policed it. We read of the election—how peaceful it was, how well the marines conducted it, how the newly elected president would be installed on January 1. We didn't make much fuss about their staying over for the inauguration party. We put the fatted calf and our complaints back into the oven and waited a while. On January 1 we read of the inauguration. At about the same time we read a report for 1928 from Marine Headquarters in Nicaragua. It said that peace had been restored, that American lives and property had been protected, that the election had gone off perfectly. It said that all those "outlaws" had been either exterminated or driven into wild regions, cut off from their supplies. Casualties among the "bandits" during 1928 were between eighty-eight and one hundred and seventy-five. One thousand seven hundred surrendered. The report in the newspapers didn't mention how many marines had been killed. We knew already, of course. We were courteously notified when they died—though some of us don't yet understand why. That report made us think our marines were coming home soon. Some of them did come, but on January 18 there were still about 3,500 down there. Now there are a few less, for it seems that this Sandino and his "bandits" have turned up again long enough to kill three Americans and two Nicaraguans. Now we read that our marines are going to be sent on an expedition into northern Nicaragua to avenge these deaths. It's all a little confusing, Mr. Coolidge. We've heard that General Sandino—who doesn't seem to be convinced even yet that he's a bandit—has offered to talk peace if the marines will leave first. Why don't you try *his* idea, Mr. Coolidge? Yours hasn't worked so well. Besides, whose marines are they? Yours or ours?

NOT A GREAT MAN, nor a showy one, but extremely able and of fine personal character is Henry L. Stimson, who appears to have been chosen by Herbert Hoover to be Secretary of State. It can be said of him that he will conduct the State Department in the spirit of Elihu Root. Of a cold personality, he often fails to give a proper understanding of himself to those who meet him. He has, however, a judicial temperament and is high-minded. If he is often too cautious, he is certainly more courageous than Mr. Hughes, and his general attitude of mind is non-partisan. Usually he is sure of his facts before acting. He was one of the best United States District Attorneys New York City has ever had; his prosecution of James Gordon Bennett for improper advertising printed in the *Herald* called for much courage and was crowned with success, to the benefit of the entire newspaper business. A colonel of artillery in France during the war, and long connected with the National Guard of New York, Mr. Stimson is distinctly militaristic and is an ardent advocate of heavy preparedness, as he showed while Secretary of War in the Taft Cabinet. In the Philippines he has done well as Governor-General in that he has won the regard of the Filipinos, who have found him much more accessible, more cooperative, and more statesmanlike than was Leonard Wood. In Nicaragua he grappled with the facts when President Coolidge sent him there to repair the damage done by the State Department's blundering, and achieved a kind of peace, though only by maintaining a beaten President in office and buying up the arms of the bulk of the Liberal army.

A VERY DANGEROUS BILL slipped through the Senate on January 23, with little discussion and almost without notice by the press—a measure for the registration of aliens which was introduced by Senator Cole Blease, that great exponent of democracy from South Carolina. Fortu-

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nately this bill does not call for compulsory registration of aliens, but makes voluntary registration possible on the plea that large numbers of immigrants who were admitted before the law of 1924 went into effect are demanding identification cards and that a law is needed to authorize the issuance of such certificates. The Secretary of Labor even holds out the bait that many large industrial plants will give preference in employment to applicants holding these cards. The truth is, however, as Senator Johnson of California admitted to a New York newspaperman, that this voluntary registration measure is being pushed through only in order to make way for legislation requiring compulsory registration. This, as we have repeatedly pointed out, is an infamous proposal, spelling police espionage and blackmail, especially desired by large employers of alien labor who would hold it as a threat over employees who might be tempted to strike or to demand improvements in their working conditions. While it is doubtful whether it can be passed by the House, we urge all liberals to concentrate their attention upon the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization if they wish to see this bill perish. We also note with regret the failure of Senator Nye's efforts to postpone once more the going into effect on April 1 of the so-called "National Origins" immigration law.

THE SALT CREEK royalty-oil scandal, which was uncovered last fall by the New York *World,* was followed up by the Senate Lands Committee in an investigation resulting in two reports which were made public on February 1. Senator Walsh's report strongly condemned the ex-Secretary of the Interior, Hubert Work, Attorney General Sargent, and Colonel William J. Donovan, assistant attorney general, for negligence in renewing last February a contract for royalty oil between Albert B. Fall and Harry F. Sinclair without proper investigation. Readers of *The Nation* will recall that this contract was declared invalid after Mr. Work had renewed it and after Attorney-General Sargent had ignored a complaint concerning its legality for four months. Unfortunately partisanship dominated the Senate Lands Committee sufficiently to produce a purely party vote on the Walsh report. Six Democrats united in supporting Senator Walsh in his condemnation of both Work and the Department of Justice; seven Republicans dissented. The more conservative of the dissenters will support the report of Senator Glenn of Illinois which whitewashes the Administration. Senator Nye, chairman of the committee, agrees with Senator Walsh in condemning Mr. Work and his aides in the Department of the Interior but he dissents from the attack upon the Department of Justice. Perhaps Mr. Nye is right in this contention; certainly no one doubts his desire to get at the whole truth. For the time being Mr. Work stands condemned by the majority of the committee and only the differences of opinion concerning the guilt of Colonel Donovan saved him from a clear-cut verdict.

THE DEPORTATION OF TROTZKY from Russia seems from this distance an unfortunate policy for the Soviet Government to pursue. Whether Trotzky ultimately finds his home in Turkey, Germany, or Austria is of little importance, because he cannot hope to influence Russian policy to any extent from abroad and he will be closely watched to prevent any communist organization in his adopted home. But the fact that the Soviet Government must resort to exiling its most distinguished citizen is a confession of weakness which should never have been made. If Trotzky has committed crimes, why should he not be tried for them in legal fashion and imprisoned or sent to Siberia, where 150 of his followers have been exiled? That the Trotzky problem is a serious one is evidenced by the spread of the dissension to the American Workers' (Communist) Party, which is badly split into pro-Stalin and pro-Trotzky wings. The regular leaders of the party are being described by the same kind of epithets which they in turn have hurled at Socialists, liberals, and reactionaries in the past. The Trotzky followers are publishing a magazine, the *Militant,* which attacks the party from the left, while Scott Nearing, a leading intellectual in the party, has attacked its leadership from another angle and declared that its Presidential campaign was a complete failure. His contention is supported by the fact that the party polled only 48,000 votes in the last election and that its membership did not increase during the campaign.

ALTHOUGH JAPAN has temporarily recognized the new tariff schedule of the Chinese Government, she has not yet joined the Western Powers in recognizing China's complete tariff autonomy, and the most troublesome issues of the Sino-Japanese negotiations are still unsettled. The continued presence of Japanese troops in Shantung, the seizure of locomotives at Tsinan, and the Japanese policy in Manchuria have aroused such opposition among the Chinese that the new Nationalist regime cannot afford to yield much ground to Japan. Chiang Kai-shek's program calls for a sharp reduction of China's armies—from 1,500,000 to 500,000 soldiers—and the substitution of national for provincial control, but it is not likely that such a program can be carried out until the Japanese crisis is past. Meanwhile the Nationalist Government and its provincial branches are seeking to establish order by the most severe discipline. Magistrates in Honan have been ordered to suppress the opium traffic within one month on pain of death. The local authorities of Tientsin are preparing a law against footbinding which, according to the Ta Chung News Agency, requires that all young women with bound feet shall be given a certain time to loosen their bindings, after which those found with bound feet will be prosecuted. Eleven robbers were paraded through the streets of Peking on February 2 and executed. From Kaifeng comes this laconic news item:

> For having visited a house of ill-fame under false pretenses, Li Kwang-yun, a member of the detective corps attached to the garrison headquarters at Chengchow, was executed by order of the garrison commander.

THE MOST STARTLING FEATURE of the new German 9,000-ton cruiser is its Diesel engine which is to give it a speed of twenty-six knots an hour. Heretofore, Diesels have been unavailable for fast cruisers because of their weight and size. This new one will weigh only about seventeen and one-half pounds per horse-power as against the sixty to two hundred and more pounds per horse-power of the heavy oil engines used on merchant ships. This engine of the Ersatz Preussen will occupy less space than any steam engine or steam-turbine equipment could be crammed into, thus leaving room for unprecedented fuel and ammunition

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capacity. Other innovations are the use of extremely expensive alloy steel, the construction of a heavy armor belt integral with the hull instead of on the outside of the structure, a heavily armored main deck for protection against air attack, and a very minute subdivision of the hull into small watertight compartments for protection against submarines. As far back as 1912 Lord Fisher, then the First British Sea Lord, declared in favor of the Diesel engine for naval vessels. His own country did not take his advice and sees now the realization of his dreams under the German flag.

REGRETTABLY, THE SUPREME COURT does not see its way clear to applying the precedent it announced in the Teapot Dome case to Porto Rico. The court has refused the petition of the United States and Porto Rico governments for a review of a 999-year lease on a 20-acre tract in the heart of San Juan's waterfront, obtained by Virgil Baker, lieutenant-commander, U. S. N., retired, in exchange for an option which cost him $360. The tract includes historic Fort San Geronimo and is valued at $500,000 in the government's petition. The Supreme Court's refusal to review the case leaves in final effect the decision of the Circuit Court of Appeals confirming Baker's title, to the disgust of most Porto Ricans. Baker, a retired officer inspecting hulls of ships for the Department of Commerce, offered his services to his country in 1917, and was placed on active duty by the Navy Department in charge of the naval radio station at San Juan. He immediately sent a radiogram to Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, stating that San Geronimo fort was vacant (it was used by the army for officers' quarters) and asking that it be assigned to him for personnel. He moved in with his family, and quartered in tents the additional marines sent to his command. In 1919 Baker recommended that the San Geronimo property, which he valued at $2,400, be traded for a radio-station site he had selected, owned by an unnamed "third party." The "third party" was himself.

BAKER'S RECOMMENDATION resulted in the Navy Department's obtaining Congressional authorization for the transfer. Justice Del Toro of the Supreme Court of Porto Rico, sitting as United States District Judge, heard the case in 1926. His decision canceling the lease asserted that the confusion caused by the war in Washington undoubtedly allowed Baker's fraudulent acts to be approved without inspection. The First Circuit Court of Appeals took another view. Disregarding the rule set down by the Supreme Court that fraud invalidates a government contract in such cases, the Circuit Court reversed this decision on the ground that the Congressional authorization was enough. It was not necessary to go behind the Congress. The gallant lieutenant-commander lived for more than ten years in his pleasant tropical residence by the sea. He was dispossessed in 1927 after Justice Del Toro's decision. But presumably he will return to flout the people of the island now that the Supreme Court has upheld the decision of the Court of Appeals.

SO CAPTAIN GEORGE FRIED of the steamship America is not, after all, to be sent around the country as a traveling advertisement for the United States Lines. The second thought of the management (stimulated no doubt by the vigorous protests which were voiced) is better than the first, and will, we believe, be welcomed by nobody more sincerely than Captain Fried himself. He was responsible for a thrilling and courageous rescue—too fine a feat to be spoiled by exploiting it as a publicity stunt to draw business to the United States Lines. The plan to send the skipper on a tour of various cities as a sample of the personnel of the American merchant marine was cruel to him and demoralizing to the service. One important reason why American seamen are of such good caliber is that so far they have been allowed to stick to their jobs and not compelled to mix them—like men in many other occupations—with publicity and advertising blah. We do not begrudge Captain Fried a vacation ashore, but after that his place, and that of every other skipper, is on the bridge of his ship—not making radio talks, writing newspaper articles, giving testimonials for cigarettes, or traveling about the United States with a blue ribbon around his neck like a prize pussy-cat.

SIX MILLION METHODISTS and Presbyterians may unite to form the super-denomination of American Protestantism as a result of the plans adopted by representatives of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States at Pittsburgh on January 30. The notion of union between such denominations seems so obvious and natural that it is surprising the consummation has been so long delayed. Probably the average Methodist or Presbyterian does not even know the theological differences between Calvin and Wesley, which originally brought division between the sects, let alone taking such differences seriously. The new union would greatly increase the efficiency of the two churches by eliminating denominational competition and unnecessary overhead, but it would not include the Methodist and Presbyterian churches of the South, where denominational bitterness is most prevalent. Meanwhile the Congregational and Christian churches, numbering more than a million members, are contemplating union under a plan which will be presented to the National Council of Congregational Churches next May.

HOW KEEN OFFICIAL MASSACHUSETTS is to forget and cover in silence the Sacco-Vanzetti execution! And how impossible it is, and will continue to be, to do anything of the sort! But at least officialdom is going to take care that it does not keep the tragedy alive through its own actions. That is evident from the conduct of the Canter case. After the *Outlook's* articles showing that Vanzetti was not guilty of the Bridgewater crime Canter carried publicly a placard reading: "Fuller, Murderer of Sacco and Vanzetti." He was charged with criminal libel and his lawyer asked for a continuance of the case until the return of the former Governor of the State from Europe, announcing his intention to call to the stand President Lowell of Harvard University, Fuller, and the latter's personal counsel, Wiggin. When Chief Justice Hall of the Superior Court learned this he persuaded the District Attorney to take the case off the trial list until Fuller's return. The judge then denied the motion of Canter's lawyer, substituting the District Attorney's promise instead. Evidently the idea is to let the charge be forgotten and then quietly nolle prosse it.

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The Cruisers and a Cruiser

SO the Senate has passed the Fifteen-Cruiser Bill unchanged, without even striking out the time-limit fixed by the House, which was opposed by President Coolidge. That he will have either the courage or the conviction to veto the bill we do not believe. It is, therefore, a clean sweep for the naval, military, and shipbuilding lobby. Whereas a year ago they were routed, horse, foot, and dragoons, they have this year carried their demands in full—thanks in large part to Sir Austen Chamberlain and to certain mass hysteria which they have created. Enough people have chanted "Fifteen cruisers, fifteen cruisers" until the phrase has achieved some of the hypnotic influence of voodooism. Coupled with a desire to "teach the British a lesson," this had its effect and, of course, the jingo section of our press has had its share in the victory of superstition, prejudice, and hysteria.

For that is what it is. What other words can be applied to this utterance of Senator James A. Reed of Missouri:

> The first duty of this body is to protect America, to make certain that we are safe, and to close our ears to the whimperings and whinings of that class of people who too often led us into blunders. To my mind the lowest form of animal life is a citizen of any country who thinks more of internationalism than he does of nationalism. . . . The general opinion of mankind, of which we have heard so much, is not to be ascertained by the dreams of enthusiasts, by the propaganda of pacifists, or by the treason of internationalists. The opinion of the nation must be determined by the policies it follows. . . . It will be small solace to the boys aboard our warships, if their vessel is sunk by superior guns, to say that pacifists passed resolutions that there should be no more war.

And what can be said about the mentality of Senator Bruce of Maryland, who actually declared in the course of the debate: "One sword keeps another in its scabbard"? Yet this man lived through 1914. Nowhere in Europe at that time did any sword keep another in its scabbard; one after another they leapt out after Russia and Serbia had drawn theirs. That minds can be so utterly closed to the teachings of recent history is beyond belief, all the more so as both Senators voted only a couple of weeks ago for the treaty outlawing war. Were they hypocrites then or now?

We confess that we are not a little dismayed by the voting of this measure and the paucity of the opposition to it—only two or three good speeches were made against it—for the militarists and navalists are never satisfied. Already they are seeking money from this Congress to build the destroyers authorized by the naval bill of 1916, for which no appropriations have so far been made. They are trying to raise these vessels to the superior capacity of destroyer-leaders, and this although we have laid up in our navy yards one hundred more destroyers than England has in her entire fleet. If it were to be left to our naval men they would tomorrow tear up the Washington agreement with as little compunction as the Germans showed in violating that "scrap of paper" with Belgium. Unless they are held in check by Mr. Hoover, we shall see one demand after another from them for "incomparably the greatest fleet," next for a fleet able to cope with any two Powers, and then for one to match the navies of any three Powers. Indeed, these demands have actually been voiced on the floor of the Senate during this debate. There has been inadequate discussion of foreign policy—that foreign policy to which Senator Reed referred—and no effort to see whether these fifteen cruisers fitted into any policies that we now have, or whether they will have any value by the time that they are built.

Ironically enough, in the very closing days of the debate, as we have already reported, a cruiser appeared upon the horizon to make these fifteen cruisers obsolete before they are laid down, that is, if they are laid down before the expiration of the Washington treaty. This new German cruiser will not only carry all the eight-inch guns given so far to cruisers under the Washington agreement, but will, in addition, carry enough eleven-inch guns to enable her to sink the fifteen cruisers in succession, while, thanks to the extraordinary reduction of weight in her Diesel engine, she will have a fuel capacity for 20,000 miles and a sustained sea speed superior to any but our fastest scout cruisers. She is indeed a small battleship with almost as heavy armor as a dreadnought. And there you have the clearest illustration of the folly of any one's believing that one nation can in these days of overnight scientific invention arm against another so as to insure its safety. Mr. Coolidge declared once that no amount of preparedness could ever save this country from attack, or insure it victory in time of war. The German cruiser attests the truth of this. And the extraordinary advance of the airplane has made the value of every warship on the seas problematical. Did Congress stop to examine this question before voting for these useless cruisers? It did not. Did it send for General Mitchell who lost his position in the army because he dared to tell this truth? It did not. Did it send for Admiral Magruder who was punished for publicly writing that our navy was wasteful, inefficient, dreadfully over-officered at the top, and out of line with modern requirements? It did not. It simply voted fifteen cruisers, without giving the slightest direction as to whether they should be offensive or defensive craft, without having the slightest idea whether they will or will not fit into any proper naval policy if we must have one. The childishness of it all is simply incredible.

So the militarization of America goes on apace. Here we have the latest and ripest fruits of the war to end war and to safeguard democracy. Here we have another legacy from Woodrow Wilson who wanted force without stint and blindly believed that he could exorcize force from the world by spilling the blood of a hundred thousand Americans. Now, ten years after the end of that war, Americans are compelled to read from the lips of the Reeds, the Bruces, and many others the precise language of national defense of militarism and imperialism which when it came from the Germans in 1914 was portrayed to all Americans as meaning the destruction of democracy and the end of civilization! We had not thought to live to see the German militarists thus justified.

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See the Job Through, Mr. Rockefeller!

AN ethical minority stockholder will be pitted against a conscienceless corporation head when the battle between John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Robert W. Stewart is decided by the stockholders of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana on March 7. Knowing that America loves the successful executive, Stewart has adroitly attempted to shift the issue of the fight and has used a large stock dividend to bolster up his prestige. However, he cannot blot out with braggadocio the fact that he took $759,000 of the fraudulent profits of the Continental Trading Company which should have gone directly to his stockholders, told the Senate he knew nothing about these profits, and surrendered the money to his stockholders six years later only after he had been caught redhanded with the numbered bonds in a secret "trust fund." In forcing such a man from leadership in the oil industry Mr. Rockefeller has the support of all decent citizens who know the facts.

Mr. Rockefeller's fight will have only begun when he removes Stewart. Several other heads and directors of Standard Oil companies are tarred with the same brush as Stewart. There is E. G. Seubert, for example, president of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, of which Colonel Stewart is chairman. When Mr. Rockefeller appealed to the stockholders to oust Stewart, he said:

> Under the loyal and devoted leadership of the president of the company, Mr. E. G. Seubert . . . backed by the whole-hearted support of the other members of the board . . . the interests of the company will be fully protected and its business well handled without Colonel Stewart.

The truth is that Seubert has worked hand in glove with Stewart, that his testimony before the Senate Lands Committee was almost as evasive as Stewart's, and that he, with the entire board of directors of the Standard Oil of Indiana, is supporting Stewart for reelection. On March 7, 1928, the board of directors of this company had full knowledge of Mr. Rockefeller's reasons for removing Stewart, but they reelected him and accepted without protest the $759,000 of loot from the dummy Continental Trading Company.

When Mr. Rockefeller has cleaned out this board of directors of the Standard Oil of Indiana, let him turn to two other Standard Oil concerns, the Midwest Refining Company of which about 99 per cent is owned by the Standard Oil of Indiana, and the Sinclair Crude Oil Purchasing Company, 50 per cent of which is owned by the Standard Oil of Indiana and is dominated by Stewart. Readers of *The Nation* will recall that during the Teapot Dome exposures it developed that most of the fraudulent profits of the Continental Trading Company were divided among four men, Sinclair, Blackmer, O'Neil, and Stewart—a part going to Albert B. Fall and Will Hays. On April 25, 1928, the board of directors of the Midwest Refining Company unanimously voted that Blackmer be allowed to keep his share of this loot, which was approximately $763,000. So stockholders of this Standard Oil concern were deprived of that amount, and Blackmer was whitewashed. The directors of the Sinclair Crude Oil Purchasing Company are of the same breed. They approved the secret contract between Sinclair and Fall for the royalty oil of the Salt Creek field which has recently been declared invalid, and they will be forced to give back to the government some of their ill-gotten millions if the suit now pending in the federal courts of Delaware is won by the government.

The truth is that the entire Western section of the Standard Oil and Sinclair interests is tainted with the unscrupulous methods of Stewart and his associates. It is a matter of common knowledge in the oil industry that Stewart has become the dominating figure in both the Sinclair and Standard Oil of Indiana concerns. The fusion of these two great oil groups was being planned when Mr. Rockefeller upset things by challenging Mr. Stewart's leadership. Behind the personal struggle is a fight for control of the oil industry between the old Eastern groups of the Standard Oil stockholders and the Western Stewart-Sinclair interests. Stewart, being a brilliant and energetic executive, has captured part of the supplies and markets of the Eastern Standard Oil group. Mr. Rockefeller is apparently disinterested and fair in his approach to the problem, but his attack on Stewart may also have its partisan commercial significance. If Mr. Rockefeller cares to go still deeper into the present oil situation, he will find ahead of him the knottiest moral problem of his career—the validity of the titles now held by the Standard Oil subsidiaries in one of the richest oil-fields in the world, Salt Creek, Wyoming. *The Nation* hopes to discuss this in an early issue.

No, Mr. Rockefeller, you must not stop with Stewart. He is the symbol of a rottenness which has spread throughout a large part of the industry. Finish the job, Mr. Rockefeller! If, incidentally, you should conclude before your task is done that graft seems to be an inevitable part of the system of the private ownership of our natural resources, *The Nation* would rejoice that a good Baptist has added economic insight to his fine moral principles.

Einstein's Latest

RECENTLY the New York *Evening Post* had transmitted to it from Germany a radiophoto of one page of the now famous Einstein pamphlet. Since it is generally admitted that not more than four or five people in the entire world will be able to understand it even after they have devoted considerable time to study, the fact that the *Evening Post's* published reproduction of a fragment was so blurred as to be literally unreadable is of no particular importance, but an undecipherable facsimile of an incomprehensible document is an odd sort of scoop for a newspaper to boast about, and it would seem to go a long way toward justifying the contemptuous remarks which Einstein himself is said to have made concerning the unintelligent curiosity of the American public.

Doubtless, however, such popular furors are harmless at worst, and it is not the childishness of the American public so much as the alleged character of the document itself which we feel to be vaguely disturbing. It consists, so we are told, of five pages of formulae. No mention is made of experience or experiment, and the momentous conclusions which are supposed to be deduceable rest upon pure mathematics

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alone. Einstein, armed only with a pencil and paper, retires into his study. While there he plays an elaborately formal game with himself and he emerges some ten years later with the statement that gravity and an electro-magnetic field are the same. This is natural science as it is now studied by its leaders, and it is more than a little alarming to those who were brought up upon the theory that nature could not be profitably studied except by those who kept themselves always face to face with her.

The trouble with all pre-Baconian thought was, so we used to be told, that it proceeded from premise to conclusion without stopping to check the intermediate stages by reference to observable fact. It relied upon infallible logic, and it reached infallible conclusions without taking the trouble to determine by observations whether any one of these infallible conclusions happened to be (as it usually was) wrong. The distinguishing characteristic of the scientific method was, on the contrary, its distrust of pure reason and its unwillingness to take a step which observation did not justify. Yet Einstein's latest contribution is, so far as we can learn, as abstract and as "pure" as a medieval metaphysician's proof of the existence of God. It starts from certain established formulae which have reference to the electro-magnetic field and by a manipulation of these symbols, so ingenious that only four or five persons can understand them, it demonstrates that the original formulae are identical with others which refer to gravity; but never once does it emerge from its abstractions. The entire work takes place upon paper and so far, at least, there is no way of knowing whether the whole has any except a paper significance.

Now we are far from wishing to suggest that we are numbered among those four or five who will be able to understand what Einstein is about. We do not forget, furthermore, that the few experiments which it has been possible to make seem to confirm the doctrine of relativity, and we do not seek to deny that subsequent experiment may tend to confirm in more or less satisfactory fashion the conclusion of these sensational five pages. But we do insist that the whole drift of contemporary science is in the direction of pure mathematics and away from the laboratory. The physicist is becoming more and more a man who deals with symbols and less and less a man who deals with observable facts. Out of himself he spins formulae much as the schoolman spun syllogisms, and if his tendency to do so continues as strong during the next twenty years as it has during those just past, then Bacon's image of the spider will soon be as applicable to the modern physicist as it was to those logicians to whom it was first applied. Mathematics has replaced deductive logic, but a textbook of the new physics is almost as far from any observable phenomena of nature as the Summa Theologiae itself.

Appropriately enough metaphysicians have begun once more to take an interest in science. Philosophers who could not solve a simple differential equation are beginning to assert that the mathematical treatment of the fourth dimension or the intricacies of the Quantum Theory furnish proof of the existence of God, but they are happier than those who thought that in physics and chemistry they had found hard ground. In all humility we bow before Einstein, but if this sort of thing goes on much longer science is going to find itself ruling a realm as autonomous and as remote as that of theology itself.

The Prince and the Paupers

IN mud to his shoe tops the Prince of Wales has just trudged in and out of the fearful misery that is England's coal-fields. "Damnable," he calls what he saw, and "enough to chill the blood." There is no doubt that he is right. And his visit is a lovely gesture, one that will not only bring the British throne nearer the hearts of the people but will probably result in larger sums for miners' relief than have ever been accumulated or than could have been accumulated in any other way. There are many thousands of persons in the world, by no means only in England, who have not sufficient imagination to picture what four years out of work can mean to a man with a wife and eight children; what a dole of less than five dollars a week can buy for a family of six or seven or eight. To them, the Prince's visit brings the true picture more clearly than it could have been brought in any other way. Even the Prince was naive enough to inquire, in a house where the children were practically without shoes: "Can't you buy better shoes than those?" Even he had actually to go inside the miserable, rickety hovels that out-of-work miners call home to realize what cold and hunger and death and disease do to men and women and to their children.

Nevertheless he did go. With considerable discomfort to himself he made the rounds, shook the hands of women who were blacking the grate, lifted up the children no matter how dirty and bedraggled—probably because they were also woefully pinched and pale. Left wingers in America and even doubtless in England will be inclined to sneer at this patronage, at this rich, leisurely young man who spends most of his life hunting or dancing or otherwise playing, condescending to visit the wretched poor and to marvel at their wretchedness. But condescension was not, we are sure, in the Prince's heart. And what he did no ruler, no statesman, no party leader at present active has ever done. The President of the United States, in the face of conditions among Pennsylvania miners only a shade better than those in Wales, sat comfortably at home in the White House and did not even make a gesture of sympathy toward those in distress.

Yet when the large sums that will doubtless be collected for British miners' relief are spent, the British coal problem will still be unsolved. Miners will still be out of work, their families will still face starvation. Relief cannot go on forever; no government, no aggregation of wealthy men is rich enough to feed half a million people indefinitely. The coal industry needs relief, it is true; but not merely relief in the form of doles or charity or food and fire. The Prince of Wales would have done better to study the problem thoroughly before he entered the coal-fields. As the heir to the British throne, surprise in the face of such a situation does not become him. This is no new condition; nor has England been without suggestions for a solution of it. But these solutions have been ignored, and the result is an industry demoralized from top to bottom. Only through a thorough reorganization of the industry and a national plan to give employment to surplus workers can the miners get permanent relief.

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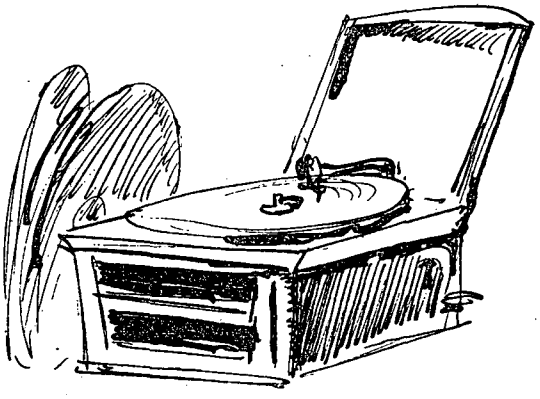
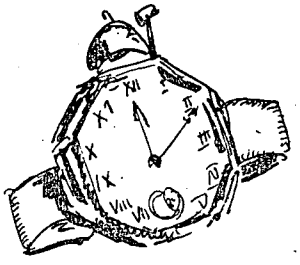
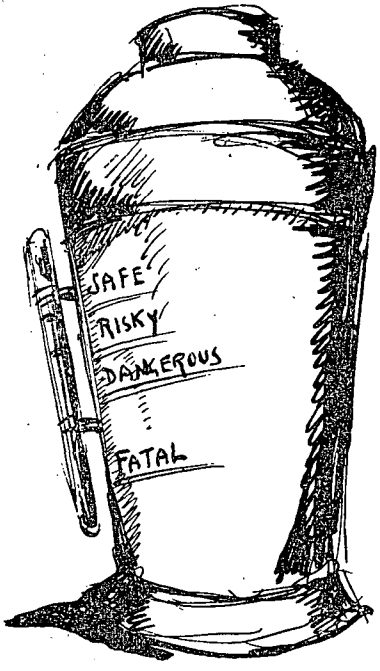


Talking machine with records containing the Daily Tabloid *news, thus doing away with the necessity of learning to read.*

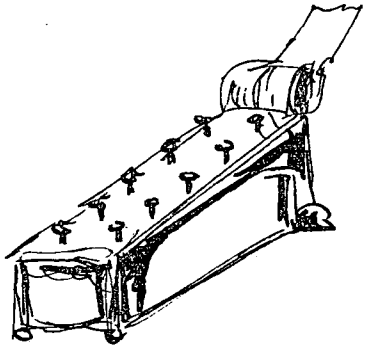
A wrist watch which strikes the hour; no need of learning to read the clock.



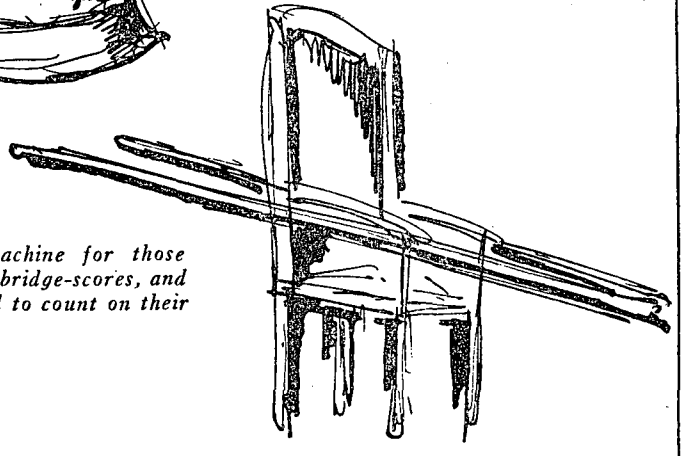


A self-starting danger light which begins to shine as soon as any one within a radius of three miles utters a sentence that contains 1/3 of 1/3 of 1 per cent of an idea.

A self-registering cocktail-shaker which abolishes the necessity of relying on one's taste.



An adding-machine for those who must keep bridge-scores, and now are obliged to count on their fingers.



A sedan-chair for those who are forced to move from their drawing-room to their car, doing away with the necessity of learning how to walk.

Gifts

Our neighbor *Vanity Fair* has tried for years to devise new gifts for the leisure class. Here are a few suggestions to help the good work along.

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Books on the Belt

By LEON WHIPPLE

HAVE you had your book this month? If not, some club, league, guild, society, cabal, academy, mail-order house, or synod of presbyters has missed a chance; or your sales resistance is 100 plus. For books are being made as accessible as milk on the stoop in this land of higher salesmanship, as compulsory as spinach. Thanks to the book clubs. One expert declares there are twenty-five such organizations. I have studied the morphology of fourteen. Over 200,000 people are getting a book a month this way; that is 2,400,000 volumes a year where perhaps half a million were sold before. Books are penetrating wherever the R.F.D. routes go. The clubs range all the way from promotion devices of publishers such as the Crime Club or the Book Selection of the American Booksellers Association through advisory aids like the Book of the Month or the Catholic Club or the *Junior League Magazine's* selections for children. The logical end is in the Book Club of the T. Eaton Co., Limited, of Toronto. Eaton's is the Sears-Roebuck and A. and P. stores of Canada. Here is the quintessence of mass-sales, mail-order literature—and two of the selection committee are professors of English in Toronto University. There is portent in this movement.

The book clubs are based on one economic axiom: but they had three godfathers. First, as is the good old American custom in literary matters, we borrowed the idea from Europe. It was partly made in Germany. The Germans have always been readers; they invented inexpensive book-publishing devices like the Tauchnitz editions; even before the World War, they had book clubs of a cooperative nature. But the present movement is a result of the post-war depression. In all Germany and Austria the membership reaches about 2,000,000. Their methods differ from the American plan. None sends a book a month; the annual subscription usually calls for four books a year, with reprints and classics as the business warrants. They do more actual publishing, and they represent often the consumers' cooperative idea.

The second godfather was Samuel Craig, stormy petrel of this movement, who had the idea of organizing a guild of readers to support good books as the Theater Guild had organized a list of guarantor-subscribers to support good plays. He perceived clearly that the publishers had to create a new audience for each book, and that the machinery for distribution was inadequate because bookstores were too few and too concentrated in cities. Large sections of the country had no convenient method of getting books. The results were small editions, high prices, a luxury concept of books, and two books sold per year to the American family. The new idea is a guaranteed audience, quantity production, and popular reading. It's not a bad idea, you'll admit—if the large audience can be persuaded to read good books.

The third progenitor was Haldeman-Julius of Little Blue Book fame. He put books on the belt a la Ford; and proved that they could be sold by the million with splurges of mail-order advertising. Confining himself to a single format—Model T—and with miraculous mechanical skill, he was able to sell a 64-page book at 5 cents, and make a profit—provided each number sold 10,000 a year. If it did not, he sent it to "the hospital" for a change of title, or other engineering. The tale is in his own book, "The First Hundred Million"; the lesson is mass sales and mass production.

Now for the economic axiom. The law of the printing-press is this: All costs (save royalties) to the moment the plates are on the press can be divided by the number of copies you sell. The standard publisher with no guaranteed list of readers can risk an edition of 2,000. Let us say he pays $1,000 to get the plates ready; then each copy bears a fifty-cent initial charge. But if you sell 50,000 copies this charge falls to two cents. Now the book clubs collect a list of subscribers who will take twelve books a year, a guaranteed sale of from 5,000 to 85,000 a month. This cuts not only the initial expense, but all other costs—paper, binding, overhead, distribution, and even royalties. The author can afford to cut his percentage if it comes from 50,000 copies instead of 10,000. He has done so at times for the book clubs. Finally, the publisher has to promote each book as a separate gamble; the club spends its money on selling one annual subscription. All these savings the club can split with its subscribers or the publishers whose books are chosen, with a share for profits and keeping the list up.

In the principal form, the clubs really act as selling agents for the publishers to this guaranteed clientele. The Book of the Month Club was the first and is the largest. It mails out the selected book at list price to over 85,000 members. On such a mass sale the publisher can naturally allow a larger discount than the bookseller's usual 33 to 40 per cent. Clubs, I am told, have been allowed as much as two-thirds off. The publisher makes a profit above the cost of the books plus the profit of increased regular sales that book-club selection generally means. The club pays its editorial expense, distribution, promotion of membership, and keeps a profit. The reader gets a good book selected by well-known critics, at the list price by mail on publication date—plus any satisfaction and social prestige his book-clubbishness lends him.

The Literary Guild publishes its own edition by arrangement with certain publishers, using the same plates and paper. It pays for this privilege; there is no discount and the saving is split with the reader. He paid at first $18 for the twelve Guild books. The fee has been raised to $21, or $1.75 a volume—perhaps to offset the charge of price-cutting. It has recently added the exchange privilege introduced by the Book of the Month Club for members who do not want the chosen book. Guild members can get substitute books by paying the difference between the list price of a book and $1.75.

The new-born Book League of America has gone one step further. It publishes one new book a month, offered by the publishers, in special magazine format, and gives the subscriber his choice of twelve old books to be selected from a

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list published by the league in its own editions. The fee is $18 for twenty-four books, or 75 cents each. Here *is* a bargain: get the recent books, and build a library of standard authors. Number 1 of the classics is "The Education of Henry Adams"; others promised include "The Dance of Life," "The Way of All Flesh," "The Golden Treasury," "Cellini's Autobiography." This scheme has thus added a library of classics, like the Modern Library or the Everyman's series, with costs lowered by mass methods and small or no fees to authors for copyrights. The unbound magazine form also is a saving. But the margins must be desperately small; the future of this ambitious scheme depends on the rapid enlargement of the present list of 6,000.

What may be called the advisory book clubs in special fields are interesting though not commercially very important. The Poetry Clan get six volumes of poetry selected by the editors of *Poetry,* a magazine, for $12 a year. The Religious Book Club sends a religious book monthly, selected by a distinguished committee of clergymen and the president of Mount Holyoke College. Members pay the list price; they now number over 7,500, from missionaries in China to residents in Alaska and the Belgian Congo, 60 per cent of whom are ministers, professors and such, and 40 per cent laymen. The Catholic Book Club started in October, 1928, on a $25 annual subscription basis, and now has 3,000 members. It is philanthropic, not money-making, and seeks to improve the Catholic literary field. Its executives receive no salaries. They dream of using the profits (if they come) to establish fellowships for needy young Catholics of talent who are now kept from doing the writing they want to do. The club will issue their book if they are worthy. Here is a clear ideal of helping authors and fostering literature. The Freethought Book Club seems to be a one-man propaganda that has as part of its purpose "counteracting the dissemination of the so-called religious books."

The problem of the commercial clubs is to keep their membership up. No masses, no mass-production economics. Arises then the ghost that haunts all culture in democracy: Shall we give the people what they want? Your sales talk may be about prestige, up-to-dateness, the value of guidance by critics, overcoming reader inertia, books delivered in the hinterlands, or the use of books for interior decoration, but your members will join and stick (without too high renewal costs) in the long run because they get what they want by the year. Even cheapness will be secondary to this. The editors may become just a board of super-experts in hitting the popular taste. To date they have not been that. They have by and large given excellent and disinterested service, as good as this nation can provide under the circumstances. They have demanded contracts enforcing their choice on the managements of the clubs; and sometimes made a club issue a book it did not want. They have stood for literature against commerce. But they do not want to pick books nobody will read: their very ideal is wider reading of better books. In general, they are not interested financially except for a monthly honorarium; in one or two cases, however, they are actually stockholders in the clubs. In any case they are human as well as critics, and the temptation to keep a big list buying one book is apparent. Once yielded to, the talk about better reading falls to the ground, and we get "Beau Geste" instead of "Whither Mankind?" or the "Anthology of World Poetry." The present editors are men and women of character and reputation; they take their task seriously. Henry Canby, Carl Van Doren, Gamaliel Bradford, Edward Arlington Robinson—the names speak integrity and love of letters. Indeed, Mr. Robinson would not pass Hardy's poems on their authorship for the Book League. He made them send him the poems! But these editors can be replaced. If advertising steps in as it certainly will in the magazine format, and, I believe, some day in regular books, then we shall have the characteristic perils of journalism: the drive for big circulation and catering to the advertiser.

There is another interesting problem in the influence of the clubs on regular publishers. They have generally got over their initial disgruntlement at the new idea. Most of them cooperate with the clubs though they complain of price-cutting and the undermining of the booksellers, the outlet they had so admirably and laboriously fostered. When the lightning hits, the publisher accepts the handsome book-club order, and usually sells extra thousands of the book through the bookstores; he may sell some of the books on the substitute club list; and he certainly profits by the creation of readers and reading-habits. Every book sold helps publishing in the United States; we are not even in sight of the saturation-point. But, as one book-club director told me, the publisher may be forced to publish better books and fewer of them. He will either have to "make a club," or compete with the clubs' books. The tendency will be to have a list of best-sellers, all books-of-the-month. Simon and Schuster are seeking this ideal, with a short list and vigorous promotion.

But who then is going to publish the solid, essential, but not very profitable book? And where does the bookseller come in? No mail-order system can replace him; he renders unique and fundamental services to the community. You can browse on him, pick for yourself, remain an individual of odd tastes, buy no book a month or seventeen. If clubs sell the cream, the best-sellers, by mail, he is left the sorry task of stocking the slow-moving, small-profit list.

On the whole the clubs have had a wholesome effect. They have stirred up the publishers and the readers. They have not seriously hurt any element in our publishing system. The advisory ones have a clear usefulness. The commercial ones have distributed many charming books, and some important ones; they have not overplayed fiction; they have exploited nothing deleterious and little that lowered public taste. They may have hitched us tighter to the belt of standardization, but reading has a terrible power of infecting with the virus of individualism. We take books on somebody's hearsay, anyhow; I rather think these editors' hearsay is as good as most. The promoters have used a lot of piffle in their sales talk that has nothing to do with reading or culture from books, but they sent along antidotes like Stuart Chase on selling and Charles Merz on bandwagons. We must remember that the clubs are still experimental: they have yet to face prosperity. They will shake down; people will learn to discriminate and use them; the good (and I suspect a couple of the bad) will survive. Compare them with our other mass-culture machines: movies, the radio, most of the newspapers, many of the magazines. By and large, let's let the book clubs live.

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Free Trade and British Labor

By JOHN A. HOBSON

WHETHER Britain is destined to remain a free-trade country depends upon the policy of organized labor. The Conservative Party, though still hesitating to nail the flag of protection to the mast, is definitely committed to an unlimited extension of "safeguarding," which is the latest subterfuge for a word whose reputation remains too doubtful for open exposure at a general election. For the great majority of conservative politicians and business men, a general protective tariff is the chief remedy for our trade depression with its unemployment and a necessary instrument of industrial prosperity. How far the party tacticians may deem it serviceable to make this tariff policy the chief plank in their electoral platform is uncertain. But it will form the chief article of faith in the addresses of their candidates. What attitude will the Labor Party and its constituent trade unions take? The latest formal statement of the party policy, indorsed by the conference of last October, a lengthy document, confined itself to the declaration that the Labor Party "is opposed to protective tariffs as both harmful to trade and unfair in their incidence," leaving it at that. No prominent political labor leader is a protectionist, all are avowed free traders, though few are so whole-hearted and enthusiastic in the cause as Mr. Snowden. But there has always been a certain reluctance to talk free trade on Labor platforms, because of a feeling that this was a Liberal property, linked to a general policy of laissez-faire that was irreconcilable with the socialism of which they believed themselves to be adherents. Liberals, indeed, have often twitted Labor with a certain inconsistency in failing to identify protection with socialism. Such logical problems, however, seldom trouble politicians, and it has been an easy matter for our laborites to remain lukewarm free traders.

Now for the first time they are subjected to a real temptation. Safeguarding has a tactical advantage over protection by reason of its piecemeal procedure. It has always been obvious that a particular trade could gain by a tariff against imports if it were the only trade so protected. So the safeguarders say: "Let us take each trade and give a separate consideration to its claims." Now the danger of this assault upon the virtue of labor arises from the fact that labor is organized in autonomous trade unions, each primarily devoted to the interests of its own members. It is true that these unions of separate trades are loosely associated both for economic and political purposes, recognizing in general terms a certain solidarity of labor. But normally their thoughts and activities are confined within the limits of a local or a national trade. The separatist cunning of the safeguarding practice can thus select those trades most exposed to the inroads of foreign goods, narrowing their appeal to the immediate interest of those directly injured.

Here is the situation as illustrated by the recent attempt of employers in two staple industries, wool and steel, to win the support of their employees to a demand for tariff protection. The desire of the trade unions in the wool industry to support the employers in an application for safeguarding is interesting in two ways. It is the first declaration for a protective policy by an important group of unions. It also exhibits a definite rift between labor politics and labor economics, inasmuch as a majority of West Riding labor members have declared that "protection will be disastrous to an industry like the West Riding trade which depends so largely on exports."

The unions in the iron and steel trades, subjected to a similar temptation to relieve their unemployment by keeping out foreign goods, have pursued a more cautious policy. Though a few of their leaders have long been avowed protectionists, there has been no such revolt against free trade as in the wool industry. After lengthy discussions a compromise has been reached in the shape of a demand for an impartial inquiry into the whole condition of the iron and steel industry. The advantage of this course is that such a commission may be expected to find other remedies for the present troubles of the trade, in the shape of reconstruction and rationalization which may enable it to dispense with a protective tariff. Delay is important, for it will reveal the essential weaknesses of a safeguarding process that disregards the dangerous reactions upon other trades and other branches of the trade affected by the tariff. In the case of iron and steel the protests of the steel-using trades, such as engineering, shipbuilding, railroading, and building, have already found vigorous utterance, while in the case of wool the preference claimed for the single branch of worsted fabrics has roused alarm in other textile branches. Indeed, it becomes obvious that, quite apart from the interests of home consumers affected by the rise of prices which must accompany a tariff, the interdependency of all trades must compel those trades that stand just outside the protected ring to seek a speedy entrance. This, of course, must serve to bring into clear relief the wide discrepancies between the gains which different trades can make out of a tariff according as they stand to gain by the higher prices such protection enables them to levy on the consumer, i.e., according to the elasticity of demand in the home and foreign markets for the goods they supply.

The folly of applying such a remedy to two great staple industries, which figure so largely in our export trade, has already been exposed by statistical records. The *Economist's* analysis of the official figures indicates that in steel "larger imports have been more than counterbalanced by growth of exports, while the increase in protection has been consumed at home." Though other countries, notably the United States and France, have made more rapid advances in output and in export trades, there is nothing to complain of in our export record on a pre-war comparison. For in thousand gross tons our exports run as follows: 1910, 727; 1923, 855; 1927, 966; 1928 (¾), 935.

Since the great bulk of our market in textile exports consists of fully manufactured goods, it would be a manifest absurdity to tax the import of raw materials or semi-manufactered goods required for these final processes. Indeed, this constitutes the very core of the free-trade case in Britain. A very small proportion of our imports consists of fully

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manufactured goods, and even of these a part goes out in reexport trade. The general case for free trade in Britain stands unimpaired and simple enough in outline to appeal to the ordinary intelligent workman. He knows that a self-sufficient Britain, producing its foods and the raw materials for its industry, is impossible, and that the widest and freest access to outside world supplies is a vital necessity. He also knows that protection cannot and would not be confined to keeping out foreign manufactured goods which could be made as cheaply and as well in this country. It is inseparably bound up with the development of empire markets, which, as Mr. Joseph Chamberlain perceived, entailed taxes upon foreign foods. The argument, wielded apparently with so much success in business, that protection brings high wages, would carry little weight with our labor leaders who are in close touch with the low-waged workers of a tariff-ridden Europe. Moreover, there are special features in our labor world impenetrable to the protectionist appeal. Our railroad and transport workers, our farm workers, building trades, public employees, domestic servants, and the ever-growing numbers in the distributive trades see nothing to gain and much to lose by protective tariffs which will put up the prices of many of their articles of consumption. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that British wage-earners are not only trade unionists but cooperators. Though the co-operative societies, comprising some four million members, are not formally attached to the Labor Party, they consist almost entirely of trade unionists and help to give force to the consumers' interests in any tariff discussion. The protectionist sophism, that a tariff will raise wages and increase employment without raising prices, is not in accord with cooperative experience.

The only argument that has any bite upon our labor leaders is that we ought to keep out the products of "sweated foreign labor," partly in the interests of "fair" competition, partly in order to help foreign workers to raise their standards of life. The official Labor program declares in favor of prohibition of such products. But under present conditions this is nothing more than an amiable gesture. There is no reliable test for foreign "sweating" and no machinery for applying any test. The proposal is correctly understood as indicating the control of free traders in the counsels of the party. A Labor Government, a possibility in six months' time, would certainly not attempt to put into operation such a prohibition as a merely national policy. Recognizing the necessity of international agreement it would work through the International Labor Office at Geneva for some organized attempt to impose minimum standards of real wages and hours upon all nations engaging in international trade. Our workers are not learned economists, but they are not fools. They are well aware that we cannot make for our people a closed national economic system, and that we cannot hope to raise the standard of living for ourselves unless some corresponding rise takes place in other countries with which we have trade relations. Thus, they are beginning to realize the paramount importance of the International Labor Office and the League machinery of economic commissions in attempting to give expression to the important truth that the economic system is a world system, and that for its most fruitful and efficient operation all national barriers to the free flow of goods, capital, and labor are damaging obstructions, which lessen the total production of wealth, impair its proper distribution, and foster ill-will and misunderstanding among peoples whose true interests are identical.

Albania: The Powder-Keg of Europe

By DUNCAN WOLCOTT

AT the neck of the Adriatic lies Albania. Having said this you have explained why Mussolini is more interested in this bedraggled kingdom of 850,000 primitive people than in all the rest of Europe. You have placed your finger on the *raison d'être* of the two treaties of Tirana. You have clarified why that ambitious young Mohammedan, Ahmed Zogu, has had himself declared king. It is no exaggeration to say that, ever since the first Treaty of Tirana in November, 1926, Zogu has been little more than a handsome puppet-President—and now puppet King—from whose coat-tails a mesh of cords run across the neck of the Mussolini-coveted Adriatic and on to Rome.

Albania today has a so-called government and a so-called king in Tirana. But all Europe knows that its real government lies in Rome and that its true dictator is the dictator of the Palazzo Chigi. It is not in idle jest that Paris music-halls in their current revues satirize "King Zogu I," presenting him in Italianized uniform, snapping automatically into a perfect Fascist salute, and barking out to his Albanian underlings in inescapably Roman accents the charmed word, "Musso-li-NI!" It is but another way of saying that Albania has been sold.

How Italy made a vassal state of Albania through the first, and then the second, Treaty of Tirana is well known. The *malaise* along the Adriatic coast has existed too long to be ignored. But of what has been happening inside Albania during the past year almost nothing is known, except for those incessant rumors which fly around the Balkans like autumn leaves half ablaze. Press reports (emanating almost wholly from Italy, it should be remarked, and therefore of practically no value as a true picture of conditions in Albania) told a few months ago of Ahmed Zogu's transition from President to King. With Latin imagination the Fascist press portrayed the enthusiasm evoked among the Albanian peasants.

That enthusiasm has since become so pronounced that King Zogu approved the execution by hanging of eleven alleged conspirators before the month was out. Several scores of others were seized by the militia and jailed. Shortly thereafter Ahmed found it necessary to postpone his coronation, scheduled for late November, to some indefinite date early in 1929. Zogu, the King, has not been seen in public more than once or twice by his people from the day he rode a few blocks from the presidential palace to the Parliament building over Tirana's cobbled streets to take the oath as monarch. For months he has been a self-elected hermit, an

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invisible king—invisible because of his constant fear of assassination.

Those who know Albania know that Ahmed has reason to fear for his life. For Albania is to the Balkans what Mexico has long been to Central America, and our Southern neighbor's internal strife and instability are no more deeply imbedded and characteristic than that pervading this feud-breeding Balkan country which today lives a full 500 years behind the rest of Europe. Of late the term powder-magazine has been applied to Albania with increasing general application. One may well demand why.

Although that is but part of the story, the phrase may, first of all, be taken literally. At the period when Ahmed Zogu was sounding the knell of the Albanian Republic the writer had occasion to spend some time in Albania, the first American correspondent to penetrate that hinterland of the Balkans in more than a year. What he saw along the Jugoslav border, what he observed of Albanian army maneuvers directed by Italian officers, and what he learned in ports where Italian ships weekly unload munitions and guns served to place a new significance on the term "Albania, the powder-magazine of the Balkans." Doubtless European chancelleries know these facts because it is their business to know them. The general public has not dreamed the true extent of Italy's military occupation of Albania because, as a rule, such things do not come to public knowledge until the powder-magazine has been touched off.

How literally is Albania an international powder-keg today? To this extent. That, in eighteen months' time, more than 300,000 rifles have been shipped from Italy into Albania; that 10,000 to 12,000 machine-guns have accompanied them. Thousands of tons of explosives have been stored in strategically located munition centers while barbed wire, for modern trench warfare, runs into thousands of tons more. In addition, approximately 400 military trucks of Italian manufacture have been installed in Albania, plus a considerable number of tanks. Since the signing of the Tirana treaties, in fact, there have been pushed across the Adriatic enough war supplies to equip an army of nearly 350,000 men, whereas Albania's army—although trebled within two years—numbers only 12,000 soldiers today. Obviously this huge supply of war materials, which Albania's own army could hardly dissipate in a ten-year war, have not been purchased by Ahmed Zogu. They are part of Italy's bargain for suzerainty over Albania. Obviously, too, there is but one use for which such an incongruous arsenal can be intended. It is a veiled but none the less real Fascist threat against Jugoslavia—a direct Italian move for domination of the Adriatic. For eighteen months Roman ships, heavily laden, have slipped across from Brindisi and Bari to Durazzo and Valona. First they went at night but now Rome's throttlehold on Albania is so strong that machine-guns and barbed wire alike are unloaded boldly in daylight.

As for the figures I have cited above, they are not from one source. Secret agents from a dozen European capitals have been watching this mobilization and their estimates, if anything, would exceed those printed herewith. Two months ago Italian arms in Albania were valued conservatively at $8,000,000. Unless the rate of militarization has slackened since then the figure today should be nearer $9,000,000. One is forced to conclude that even $8,000,000 is a large price to pay for a treaty of amity.

Nestled between the northern mountains of Albania is Scutari. In Italian eyes it is the most important town in Ahmed Zogu's kingdom. That is because it is the key town leading across the Jugoslav border into ancient Montenegro. If ever an Italian war breaks out with Jugoslavia—and for two years the prospects of such a war have been brighter than for any other potential rupture of the peace in Europe—it is almost certain to flame into hostilities somewhere along the Albanian-Jugoslav frontier. Scutari, then, is of highest importance to Rome. And one-fourth of the entire Albanian army, roughly 3,000 troops, have been stationed in and near Scutari for months. Recently Scutari was astonished to find itself the recipient of a very modern hospital, and anything modern in Albania is indeed a surprise. It is virtually a military hospital; at least, it can be transformed into such overnight. Along this same border, too, Italian officers in the guise of Red Cross officials traveled a few months ago. In all they spent nearly six months mapping out the Jugoslav frontier, charting military roads, and recording nests for machine-guns.

In other words, the powder for another Balkan war is spread liberally and well. It remains merely for someone to drop a match into it, and that is so simple a procedure that its danger can hardly be overestimated. Bandits throng this untamed sector of the Balkans. Vendettas are the heritage of the wild tribesmen of the Albanian hinterland. Only a few hundred dollars in bribes would be necessary today or tomorrow to launch a bloody raid from Jugoslavia into Albania or vice versa.

There are other significant phases to Italian infiltration in Albania. For the most part Mussolini bought these prizes for a few royal trappings and a kingly title for Ahmed Zogu. It is a satisfactory bargain for each because each gets what he most desires. The distinction lies here. King Zogu's regal doodads may vanish tomorrow with the lightning hum of an assassin's bullet. Italy's gains cannot be shaken off so quickly. One generation or several may be required before Albania can free herself, if ever, from vassalage to Rome. This explains why Italy followed up the first and second Tirana treaties with the speed and directness of a set purpose. Military supremacy first, financial and economical usurpation immediately thereafter. The consecutive events since the signing of the first Tirana treaty speak for themselves.

Until the end of 1926 Albania, the last outpost of the feudal system of the Middle Ages, possessed no currency of its own. Tribesmen carried on their trade by barter and in a large measure still do today. What could not be bartered was paid for in gold—Turkish gold crowns, French Napoleons (twenty-franc pieces), and British crowns. The simple Albanian peasants had no need for other money than this foreign gold of another epoch which had drifted into the backwash of the Balkans and remained there.

It was only after Tirana that Albanian finances were "modernized." Under Fascist suggestion an Albanian National Bank was organized with 51 per cent control by supposedly native Albanians, and 49 per cent control by Italians. Paper money and metal coins were issued and all the foreign gold currency then in circulation was called in. The gold was shipped to Rome (where it is said to have been used to help stabilize the lira); the paper money was left in Albania.

Authoritative observers estimate that from $5,000,000

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to $10,000,000 in gold has been taken out of Albania by this ruse in a little more than two years. It is not in the country's banks, for these banks steadfastly refuse to exchange the new currency for gold for anyone except those whom they dare not refuse. Meanwhile Albania's paper money and shiny artistic leks, as the coins are called, have virtually no exchange value anywhere in Europe aside from Italy (where a good front demands it) and in parts of Jugoslavia. Albania's Fascist-given native money exists without any gold reserve worthy of the name. The gold has gone to help pay for the benefits of the Treaty of Tirana. Both the gold and the actual control of the "Albanian National Bank" are in Rome. Those who have known these facts from their genesis refer to the achievement as "Italy's systematic plundering of Albania's gold." The ignorant, trusting, simple-minded tribesmen of the Mat and Gheg will be the last to learn the truth, but already it is too late for the truth to be of any use.

Similarly there was the drive to confiscate, in polite fashion, all the richest of the country's lands. It failed because, whereas one coin may look as good as another to the Albanian peasant, centuries have taught him that his existence depends on his own bit of soil. Nevertheless soon after the first Tirana treaty, Italian agencies began to grab up thousands of acres on 99-year leases. The most valuable farms were passing into Fascist control at an alarming rate. Rome's intention, too obviously, was to hold all the richest agrarian sections of Albania. But the grumbling of the peasants for once demanded attention and a usually weak-kneed Parliament passed a law limiting such land leases to twenty years' duration. In this one particular Italy's plan was thwarted.

Should you inquire, however, in Durazzo, Albania's chief seaport, about the dredging and broadening of the harbor there you would encounter new testimony to the genius of Italian exploitation. You would learn that an Italian company has charge of the modernizing of Durazzo's harbor. On what terms? Under a contract which contains this singular provision: that the cost of transforming Durazzo into a deep-sea harbor—a harbor capable of sheltering a large Italian war fleet—shall be limited to 8,000,000 gold francs. The contract to the Italian firm goes on to provide that if, however, the cost shall exceed 8,000,000 gold francs by any amount whatever all Italian shipping will be entitled to free entry to the port of Durazzo without taxation for the first five years following the harbor's completion. No citizen of Durazzo who thinks about the matter has any doubt about which side of the ledger the Italian firm's report of costs will ultimately fall.

Here is but another of the graceful sleight-of-hand performances which characterize every turn of Italy's domination of Albania. All public works in the country today are done under Italian supervision. Italian engineers build the roads and conduct the present minute topographical survey. Considerable modernization has been accomplished, a few excellent roads constructed. It is a strange coincidence which reveals that the modernization falls where a dual interest is served; that the roads invariably have been built in districts where they are of more military than industrial value.

Before the Tirana treaty Albania was unique among all the countries of Europe in that she had no foreign debt whatever. Since that time Rome has granted loans for road-building, for the development of Durazzo harbor, and for similar causes. The interest rate on some of these loans is still undecided but the proposed rate of interest has been considered as ranging from 5 to as high as 13 per cent. There is only one certainty to those who have watched all this—that eventually Rome will be paid, if not in coin then in kind. Would Albania itself be sufficient repayment for Italy's generosity? Hardly. Would Albania plus the realization of Mussolini's long dreamed-of control of the Adriatic suffice? That is another thing.

Today King Zogu lives in Tirana, a self-imprisoned monarch. For weeks he is never seen on the streets. Never since he became head of the government has he dared leave his home alone. Horseback riding he has abandoned, since assassins could too easily waylay him. In order to have some exercise he has had a gymnasium constructed in the large frame house which is known as the "Palace." Even visitors are rarely received by the King and when he does receive them he is sure who they are. Certainly few monarchs were ever less master of their own comforts and own lives than Ahmed of Albania. Yet for the sake of a title which even Mussolini (except in his official dispatches to Tirana) can hardly take seriously, Zogu has become the hermit of the Balkans. Perhaps there is compensation. As President Ahmed Zogu received a salary equivalent to $50,000 a year. It has since been increased, so it is authoritatively reported, to at least as much as the salary of the President of the United States. That is not a bad income for the ruler of a poor little kingdom of 850,000 souls.

Follow up the Albanian sea-coast on a map and you will note, just over the border in Jugoslavia, a pronounced, shoe-shaped indentation. It is the harbor of Cattaro, probably the greatest strategic naval base in the world. Some say that it was founded by the Romans as a naval base fifty years or more before Christ. At any rate, it is a marvelous, natural deep-sea harbor curving inland for ten miles into what are really twin harbors, an outer and an inner one. Only a narrow neck of an entrance and on either side the sheer rocks of the Serbian mountains rising thousands of feet above the placid depths. An impregnable sea fortress of greater potentialities than Gibraltar. The post-war geographical shake-up gave Cattaro, or Kator as the Jugoslavs call it, to the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

In Cattaro and the entire Dalmatian (once Venetian) coast from Ragusa up to Trieste you find the true explanation of Rome's Adriatic aspirations. Given Cattaro alone, the Adriatic Sea will be Italy's beyond hope of recovery. It is no secret that Rome wants the Adriatic and the Dalmatian coast. All the shrewd bargaining which led up to the Treaty of London in 1915 and Italy's entrance into the war on the side of the Allies hinged upon how much of the Dalmatian coast Rome was to receive for helping to save the world for democracy. What Italy regrets today is that she did not insist upon the whole cheese or none.

So it is that all that has happened in Albania since November, 1926, and especially during the past twelve months has been in the nature of a tightening of Italian cords on the Adriatic. But those who have seen the proud and easy carriage of Jugoslav soldiers, who have watched their chiseled faces, admired their physical might, and observed in their eyes the burning love of freedom of a people born to be

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free—these may well wonder whether, in the end, Mussolini will dare to call his own bluff.

I am forced to remember the warning of a Serbian barber, spoken while dextrously administering a shave in another land far removed from his own. These were his words: "Mussolini had better leave them alone down there," he said with a flash in his eyes, "or he'll burn himself. Those people down in Jugoslavia eat a lot of paprika."

In the Driftway

THE water hasn't quite been wrung out of the Florida boom yet, if the Drifter may be allowed a somewhat mixed metaphor. Some persons, loath to accept losses, are still hanging on to high-priced land who will eventually have to let go, and it is said on the spot that a few years more must elapse before real estate gets back to "normalcy"—a condition, by the way, which probably never existed anywhere except in the mind of amiable old Warren Gamaliel Harding. But the high-powered boosterism of 1925-1926 is gone; such remnants as are left are amusing rather than pestiferous. In Miami, for instance, the newspapers whose columns once groaned with the advertisements of real-estate developments now solace themselves with a glorification of the local weather by holding up that in the North in lurid contrast. The morning newspaper prints no local weather prediction. Apparently its attitude is that the weather in Miami is always fine, so why mention it? But both the morning and the evening newspaper play up the weather in the North as front-page news. A little spell of cold or rain in Chicago or New York, which is dismissed by the press of those cities with a few inconsequential paragraphs or gets no notice at all, is good for a spread-head on the first page in Miami.

* * * * *

THE uniform of the motormen-conductors on the Miami trolley-car lines is a blue-serge coat and white-duck trousers. It's natty, the Drifter is bound to admit, but there are days—even in the land of sunshine—when white duck is unnecessarily cool. In fact, anywhere except in Miami it would be pronounced cold. So the motormen proposed not long ago that in cool weather they be allowed to wear trousers of the same material as their coats. Whereupon one of the newspapers came out in an impassioned editorial against the suggestion. Let the men wear heavy woolen underwear, if necessary, it pleaded, but by no means allow them to put off their white duck.

* * * * *

ONE notes the spirit of the booster, too, in the names of the radio stations. There are two broadcasting stations on Miami Beach, WIOD and WMBF. All right so far, but guess what the letters stand for: Wonderful Isle of Dreams and Wonderful Miami Beach, Florida!

* * * * *

YET it's a vastly impressive sight, this winter playground in the southernmost tip of the United States, and it gives one a new vista of the industrial might of our country to reflect that in 150 years of independence we have been able to create such an enormous surplus of material wealth as to transform what was once a desolate, deserted coast—with no assets except climate, sea, and sand—into miles and miles and miles of hard roads and concrete sidewalks, lined with cocoanut palms and every sort of dwelling from bungalow to palace hotel. The desert has more than blossomed like the rose; it has blossomed like a Fifth Avenue florist's shop—at Easter.

* * * * *

AND to any one who contemplates a visit to Miami the Drifter has a tip. Touch off a stick of dynamite on East Flagler Street on the day of arrival. This should insure one a reservation in the jail, which is by all odds the finest location in the city. For the jail occupies the top three floors of the twenty-eight story Dade County Court House, said to be the highest building south of Washington. What air! What a matchless view! And all for nothing!

THE DRIFTER

Contributors to This Issue

LEON WHIPPLE is associate editor of the *Survey*.

JOHN A. HOBSON is a foremost British economist and a contributing editor of *The Nation*.

DUNCAN WOLCOTT is the pseudonym of the Paris correspondent of an American newspaper.

ALBERT S. WHITELEY is an instructor in the department of economics at the University of Pittsburgh.

CHARLES A. WAGNER will publish in the spring a book of poems, "Nearer the Bone."

ALEXANDER KAUN, associate professor of Slavic languages and literatures at the University of California, recently spent a summer with Maxim Gorki.

LEONORA SPEYER is the author of "Fiddler's Farewell" and other books of verse.

ABBE NILES has made a special study of popular music and poetry.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH published in the fall "The Hamlet of A. MacLeish."

ROBERT LIVINGSTON SCHUYLER is professor of history at Columbia University.

EDNA KENTON is author of "The Book of Earths."

DOROTHY THOMPSON, formerly the Berlin and Central European correspondent of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, is the author of "The New Russia."

JAMES RORTY is the author of "Children of the Sun."

MELVILLE J. HERSKOVITS, of the department of anthropology at Northwestern University, recently accompanied the Morton C. Kahn expedition to Dutch Guiana to study the Bush Negro.

LEWIS S. GANNETT is contributing editor of *The Nation*.

RUTH PICKERING is writing a series of articles on the dance for *The Nation*.

CHARLES LEE SNIDER, of North Carolina, is a frequent contributor to the magazines.

B. H. HAGGIN is studying music in Europe.

JOHAN SMERTENKO is a New York critic.

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Correspondence

The Church and War

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: Your issue of December 19 referred to an action taken at the quadrennial meeting of the Federal Council of Churches held in Rochester last month with reference to the attitude of the church toward war. Because a certain resolution which was presented for inclusion in the Social Ideals of the Churches, commonly referred to as the "Social Creed," was referred back to the Social Service Commission, from which it emanated, for consideration at the next quadrennial meeting, you say the Federal Council of Churches "must mark time for four years." This is an altogether erroneous inference.

The Federal Council at the Rochester meeting took action, with reference to armaments, directed against the cruiser bill, and strongly urged the ratification of the Peace Pact. Through its administrative committee, which meets monthly, the council may make and does make declarations on the moral issues that confront the churches or the nation, as they arise. The particular resolution to which you referred was aimed at introducing into the "Social Creed of the Churches"—a relatively permanent document which only the quadrennial meeting of the council can modify—a statement that the church should refuse "as an institution to be used as an instrument or an agency in support of war." There are two reasons for the action taken with reference to it:

1. While the Federal Council may properly make any declaration of moral principles that it sees fit, it was felt that a declaration of what its constituent churches should do in the event of war, made without any attempt to consult the constituency on the point, would be regarded as an abuse of the council's representative function. Questions inevitably arise in connection with a general statement of this kind as to precisely what is intended by it. For example, would the action proposed prevent the churches from cooperating with the Red Cross or from furnishing chaplains to men in service? There is little value in our adopting a sweeping resolution unless its meaning is perfectly clear and unless there is reason to believe that it represents a substantial body of opinion within our own constituency.

2. When this resolution was put forward it was part of a report from the Social Service Commission proposing that the whole document known as the "Social Creed" which was formulated in 1912 should be revised during the coming quadrennium. Since it was not deemed possible to adopt the war resolution—clearly a more radical one than any large religious body has ever adopted—it was most natural that the commission should be instructed to take the matter again under advisement and report it, together with a revision of the whole document of which it would be a part, four years hence.

I would like to add that there is a conviction on the part of many who have been active in social movements within the churches during recent years that altogether too much stress is placed upon the importance of resolutions and pronouncements. Much less interest was taken at Rochester in the "Social Creed" than in specific declarations with reference to concrete current issues. In the opinion of many of us the latter have vastly greater importance. Personally, I believe the business of creed writing whether in religion, education, or ethics is somewhat anachronistic and has very little relation to the active life of an individual or an organization.

During the last four years, under the vigorous intellectual and moral leadership of Dr. Cadman, I believe the Federal Council has registered more effectively in relation to concrete issues over which battles were actually being fought than in the days when it was more prolific of general pronouncements. That the council proposes to maintain a vigorous policy, the election of Bishop McConnell leaves no doubt.

New York, January 25 F. Ernest Johnson,
Executive Secretary, Department of Research and Education, Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America

Preparedness!

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: I wonder how many of your readers have profited from your recent editorials pointing out the strong probability of a war with England. I have.

There is in my trunk a great number of manuscripts. Some of the titles at random: "I'm Going to War, Now, Mary, but I'll be Back to Marry You!" "Goodby, Peoria, I'll Bring You Back a Book from Buckingham!" "The Redcoats are Cutthroats, but We'll Beat 'Em With Our Big Navee!"

The music's bad and the lyrics not much better, but I figure that by composing these songs now I'll have them ready the minute war begins. I figure to make a lot of money.

Detroit, Michigan, January 25 Arthur Clifford

An Obsolete Doctrine

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: It is about time that the statesmen or politicians who are so solicitous to protect the Monroe Doctrine should explain its meaning in this day. Originally the Monroe Doctrine was based on the following facts or aims:

1. Europe should not meddle in American affairs and we should not meddle in European affairs.

2. It should prevent European nations from establishing or extending holdings in this hemisphere. The object was to keep out the monarchical system from America and to protect our weak sister republics.

By taking part in the World War the first part lost all moral basis. As to the second part there is not any more danger; besides the sister republics resent our big-brother attitude. Since we have a League of Nations, a World Court, Pan-American conferences, and a Pan-American arbitration pact, there is no opening for the Monroe Doctrine any more. If we were frankly to declare that it has become obsolete, it would help to establish more cordial relations with Latin America.

Redlands, California, January 19 Max Hentschke

Stockholders on Trial

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: In the Rockefeller-Stewart controversy is it not the stockholders who are being tried out as to their moral integrity?

Proxies have been asked for to oppose or stand by an officer or servant of this Standard Oil Company who has under oath told two different stories. He secured acquittal because he told these contradictory stories before seven Senators instead of eight. Do the stockholders want a president whose word is not good even under oath? Will their proxies not determine their own moral background?

San Diego, California, January 20 F. H. Hobbs

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International Relations Section

Canada's R. O. T. C.

By ALBERT S. WHITELEY

IN the United States we have the R.O.T.C. to supply the army with college-trained officers and create popular admiration for natty uniforms and bright epaulets. In Canada it's the C.O.T.C.—the Canadian Officers Training Corps. Unlike the policy pursued by the R.O.T.C. in the United States the Canadian counterpart has never thought it necessary to advocate compulsory membership but to rely on the rallying-cry of Empire protection to fill the ranks of the militia.

The corps at the University of British Columbia was a war-time growth, and during the hectic days of the struggle the campus often resounded to the martial activities of those students who were preparing for service overseas. With the conclusion of the war many of the returned men took up their interrupted studies. They were surprised to find that some of the younger generation were following the futile course of seeking peace by preparing for war. It is indeed a striking commentary on military policy to find the men who had actually fought for the empire rejecting the methods that they had been forced to employ. For a time the returned soldiers looked on the misguided members of the C.O.T.C. with eyes but slightly jaundiced, but as the familiar parade-ground jargon continued to fall upon their ears a more belligerent attitude developed. One fine day these doughty warriors seized the fire-hose and swept the neophytes of Mars from the campus, so damping the fires of military endeavor that for seven years no attempt was made to rekindle them.

Although repulsed with very serious losses the commander of Military District No. 11, within whose jurisdiction the university lies, did not concede the battle. Or more likely in the intervening time a new commanding officer was appointed who thought that the reestablishment of a corps in the university would receive favorable comment at Ottawa. At all events, in the spring of 1928 it was found that by subtle suggestion and guarded publicity the reorganization of the unit was well under way and little or no opposition was being encountered. The plans of the Canadian militia make the efforts of the Reserve Officers Training Corps appear as feeble stratagems. Here was no attempt to get the campus queen to accept an honorary colonelship or the social fraternities to support military balls. Rather the appeal was to the love of adventure that burns in every youthful breast and that spirit of wanting to aid the Alma Mater. The campus at British Columbia lacked a gymnasium so the military commander offered his cooperation to remedy this serious deficiency. The Department of National Defense was prepared to make money grants if a corps were established. The militia would only be too glad to capitalize this fund and use it as the interest payments on a loan that could then be floated to cover the cost of a gymnasium. As the grant would depend on the size of the unit the larger the corps the larger the gymnasium. Thus it would be the duty of every man to join the C.O.T.C. and so swell the government grant. It is a well-known psychological principle that although group feeling is a powerful force you can accomplish much more if you also appeal to the individual. Our Canadians are not lacking in such modern technique. Although Canada has no Lindbergh, "air-mindedness" is no less strong among its youth. So the Canadian Officers Training Corps offered a free course in aeronautics to all qualifying for instruction. And yet this well-planned program failed to achieve its purpose with the ease and expedition that should have characterized such a military maneuver. No, it even became evident that the students were not satisfied with the price they were getting for their birthright although the board of governors was content with the bargain.

In fact, it was clear that the students were not going to leave their objections unstated. One noon hour they gathered together and after discussing the matter at some length came to the conclusion that the Canadian Officers Training Corps would be an objectionable type of organization to have upon their campus. They then embodied this view in a resolution which they forwarded to the board of governors and the university senate (board of trustees), supporting it with a majority vote of two to one. Such a determined stand seemed to merit some consideration, so the university senate withheld its indorsement until the fall. In the interval the president of the university left on a long leave of absence and Dean Brock of the faculty of applied science was appointed acting president. Under his chairmanship the university senate decided to permit the reestablishment of the C.O.T.C. and it is reported that Dean Brock was forced to cast the deciding vote, which he did in the affirmative.

The dean of applied science is also imbued with imperialistic tendencies and gave but scant attention to the student opposition. In a characteristic statement to the Vancouver press he declared that the opposition to the corps had originated with a few zealots who had been able to appeal to the sentiments of the students. The university senate gave its decision in October, 1928. Just one month later the students again assembled and passed a resolution, which is copied from their minutes, stating

> that the opinion of the Alma Mater Society (the entire student body) is identical with that of last year, namely, as being unfavorable to the existence of a Canadian Officers Training Corps in this university, and furthermore, that the Alma Mater Society petitions the senate to disestablish the Canadian Officers Training Corps.

It is rather difficult to reconcile this statement with the opinion of the dean that the opposition to the corps is a minority group. For the present the administration is overruling the students, but the stand they took against military training is encouraging.

Another encouraging feature is that the discussion was characterized by complete freedom of assemblage and of speech for the students and at no time were any restrictive measures contemplated. Such a liberal viewpoint on the part of an administrative body might well be followed in other institutions.

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MIDWINTER BOOK SECTION

The Nation

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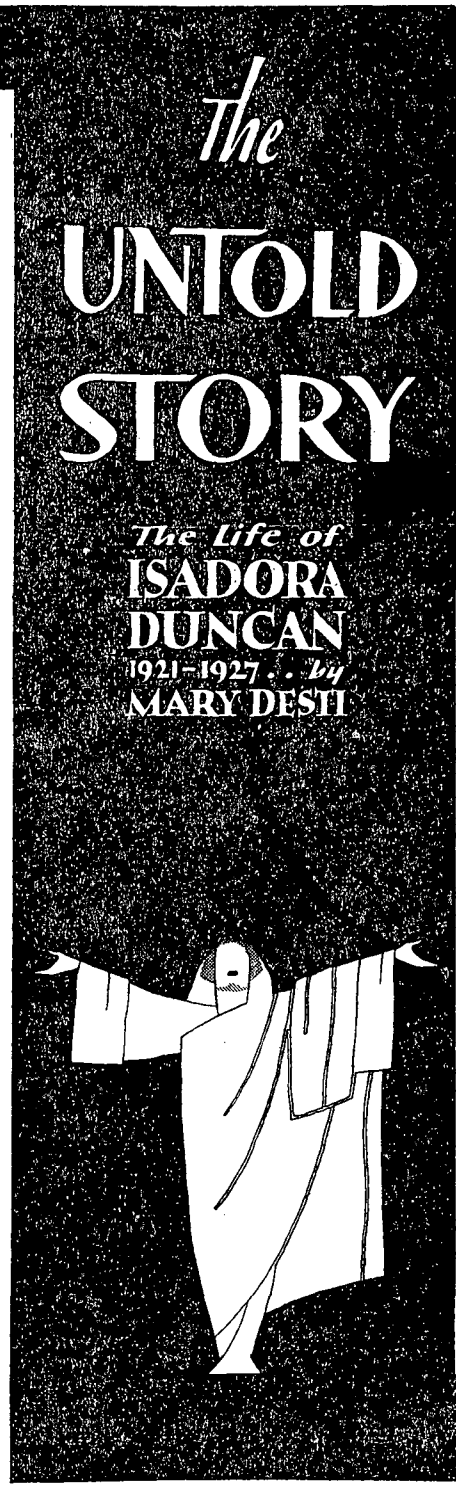

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Midwinter Book Section

Roads

By CHARLES A. WAGNER

There is a meaning in the shapes of roads.
There are roads that are powdered with dust
And go straight ahead and say nothing.
There are roads that stop for a drink
And bend away again with the roundness of a woman
Whose dress is trimmed high with red and green.
There are roads that come suddenly into a town
Where a man who is thirsty and hot with the ugly sunlight
Finds the shade of a roadway store
And a cup of cider from a rotten barrel.
There are roads that step out of nowhere
And lead right back to nowhere again.
There are roads that begin with a weed
And flower into a perfumed garden
Where a lady sits on a stone bench
Letting herself be told things
That should be said in a garden.
There are roads that bend their branches over
Like tired arms begging no wind at all,
And there are roads that open their strong limbs
And enfold the tired traveler.

There are roads that wear their shawls of flowers
As love wears the garment of ecstasy.
There are roads that stop suddenly, like the coming
Of a mountain storm,
Where the dead trunks of lightning-shattered trees
Are like mute philosophers
Pondering on the bitter strength of Chaos.

There are roads where a girl comes the opposite way
And the spirit drops fire in a moment of passing.
There are roads to be walked alone,
And they are the most beautiful of all.

There are roads that climb a steep hill
To a white cottage where music and revelry
Await the starved, hungry hearts of loveless farm-boys.
There are roads that lead back—
Faint, tired roads.
There are roads that go two different ways,
And one way will always be the better
But there will never be returning. . . .
There are roads fringed with the crystal
Of forgotten promises and purposes,
There are roads scarred with wagon-tracks
Deep and light, for riders of revelry and riders
Of grandeur that ends in an empty mud-puddle.

There are roads that lead into the streets of big cities,
Roads that start in forest pools of mist and moonlight
And cross many bridges to spend themselves
Into the harsh suction of a hundred huddled streets.
There are roads that listen to stories of particular woe,
And there are roads that run with melody
At each new turning. . . .

But there are also roads,
Orphaned and lonely and waste,
That never knew the richness
Of a colored flower;
Meagre, starved roads
Where never a little foot
Cared to linger,
Where hungry sparrows
Pluck furiously at the earth
And scatter in alarm.

There is a meaning in the shapes of roads.

Gorki's Unfinished Novel

By ALEXANDER KAUN

IT is good to hear that Gorki has once more left Russia for Italy. Moscow is deadly—for his health and for his talent. More tyrannical than the Russian winter is the Russian public. Not only has it sapped Gorki's strength by having him participate in celebrations and excursions lavishly arranged in his honor, but the devoted public also clamors for his pen. It demands his leadership, in matters not purely literary. And Gorki, now past sixty, is still impressionable. Unlike Chekhov, he succumbs to the embrace of the public. While in Russia he always suffers from an editorial bee. He needs perspective and freedom from public duties to do his best work. May Capo di Sorrento hold him fast! At least long enough for him to finish "Klim Samgin," the novel which, in private conversation, he has called his life work, his ultimate test. "Klim Samgin" is intended as a picture of the last forty years of Russia—a huge canvas. The first volume appeared in 1927, and the second recently. They contain over eleven hundred pages, and bring us just to the revolution of 1905. Will the third volume end the novel? Or will it remain unfinished?

"Klim Samgin" is not a regular historical novel, with the past crystallized and sharp edged. The author places us in the position of contemporaries, our vision limited by proximity. We move with the events, downstream, with no chance for detachment and analysis in retrospect—a method that makes the story both vivid and vague. We feel as if we were in the panorama rather than outside of it.

The eighteen eighties. Alexander II has been assassinated—the grand gesture of the Narodovoltsy, the Will of the People. The romantic page of the revolutionary move-

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ment is closed. Gray and heavy days of the Czar-mujik, Alexander III. The intelligentsia still worships the Narod, the People, the Sphinx of Turgenev, but no longer heroically. Drab times, petty deeds, craven slogans. Pseudo-Tolstoian non-resistance serves as a screen for acquiescence. Meanwhile the tempo of rural Russia is accelerated by the machine. An economic coincidence: famine in the village, factories in the city. The peasant is being boiled in the proletarian kettle. Witte, capitalism, industrialization—we are in the eighteen nineties. A new Czar, fresh hopes. The young monarch explodes all hopes by word and deed. The coronation of Nicholas II is accompanied by thousands of bodies trampled to death on the Hodynka Field of Moscow. An omen. We see him again at the opening of the Nizhni Novgorod Fair. Opulent Russia flaunts her wares and her multiple creeds and races. The vast, lumbering empire avidly greets its master—a puny, blond nonentity decreed by fate the jester to take the helm of the careening ship. The autocrat is helpless in his omnipotence. Land of extremes, Russia is torn with contradictions. Wealth and culture at the top, penury and ignorance at the bottom. The top is thin and tiny; the bottom, solid, broad, enormous. The privileged minority owes its existence to the stupidity and patience of the abused majority. But out of the minority come forth the forces that whittle the branch on which it is perched. College students, liberals, Socialists, revolutionists dissipate the stupidity and patience of the majority. The revolution becomes inevitable. Frantic, autocracy fights for its life by blood-letting devices, at home and abroad. War with Japan—unrelieved disaster and disgrace. Red Sunday—thousands of workmen, peacefully marching to the Winter Palace with crosses and portraits of the Czar, shot down by the Guards. Red Terror. Governors, ministers, grand dukes are dynamited by members of the minority in behalf of the inarticulate majority. Finally, the pure Russian gesture—passive non-resistance. A national strike, unorganized, elemental. Life is paralyzed. Factory workers, bankers, switchmen, ballerinas, janitors, opera-singers, bakers, typesetters, cabmen—refuse to function. The weak but mulish autocrat yields. The Manifesto of October, 1905, grants liberties and a representative Duma. The people are drunk with joy; Chaliapin publicly roars the "Dubinushka." Presently Nicholas II will repent of his momentary "weakness." Freedom granted from above will prove ephemeral. It will be drowned in rivers of blood. Another spasm will keep the pulse of autocracy beating for twelve more years. But that is a story for the third volume.

This kaleidoscope is vaguely suggested as a background. In the foreground, minute and clear, passes the life of Klim Samgin. Is it an author's whim to have a drab individual, utterly unheroic, dominate the grandiose epos? Or is it rather the caution, the modesty of a builder who knows his material? Gorki himself lived through those forty years, lived them actively. He has been intimate with the men and movements of that period, and is at home there. Precisely because of that, perhaps, he does not trust himself; his creative vision feels the lack of space, distance, perspective. A Tolstoi may possibly rise in the next generation to depict Russia's "War and Peace," but for the moment Klim Samgin's reaction to the contemporary drama is the safest. Klim Samgin is not a leading actor in this drama, nor does he belong to the rank and file who shout hosanna in self-oblivion. Gorki has endowed this ordinary, even petty person with a cold, detached skepticism. Corroded with introspection he is so preoccupied with himself that only rarely does he appear to be moved by things outside of his personal world. Yet, though unsocial and egotistic by nature, he is thrown in with the revolutionary youth of Russia, and is thus placed at a vantage-ground for watching the drama. Klim Samgin is the fulfilment of a wish which Gorki has had for several years: to create a Russian who from his childhood is taken for what he is not, and is doomed to act a role throughout his life. His father, a muddle-headed intellectual of the eighties, has forced on Klim and on others the conviction that his son has an extraordinary intelligence and a congenital sympathy with the masses. Klim frets and at times rebels inwardly, but lacking the courage of frankness he proceeds to wear the mask imposed on him and remains self-conscious and alert. His personal affairs and problems, for the most part sexual, form the bulk of the novel. The development of his character, through the maze of artificiality and sham, appears to be Gorki's main task, while the political and social drama of Russia is reflected for us incidentally, through the cold, unsympathetic eyes of Klim Samgin. If, notwithstanding, we are keenly aware of the magnitude and sweep of those events, we owe it to the subtle adroitness of the author's suggestive power.

As to the style of the novel, it is Gorki himself. Sixty years old, he does not feel he has yet arrived; he is still striving for improvement, still reaching out for new forms. His prose is growing crisper, of keener incisiveness and closer precision. As ever, he is primarily a portraitist. But his gift of visualizing and presenting a person by means of a few sure strokes has reached its highest point in "Klim Samgin." One even suspects that the author is a bit self-conscious about this gift of his, for he displays it too readily, too generously. The result is almost fatiguing.

Again, Medusa

By LEONORA SPEYER

This Perseus dared;
Met fearlessly the lovely Gorgon's eyes,
The while she stared.

It was as though he took
Her small face in his hand,
Tipping it mirror-wise,
Bidding her look;
That she too might behold
That rare iniquity, might realize,
Beyond the mild delight
Of her pure pink and white,
Medusa! the ferocious-souled.

This Perseus dared,
And went his way,
Forgot the incident completely;
The while she, standing there alone,
Baleful and bared,
Turned slowly, grimly, neatly
Into stone.

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A Note on Gershwin

By ABBE NILES

A LITTLE while past it was vulgarly considered safe to praise light foreign music, Viennese waltzes, Spanish folk dancing, and even the scores of English musical comedies; but American popular music (by which is meant music of a recognizably native flavor, written for publication and sale, and exhibiting the technique which then made it most likely that the sale would be large) was considered something to be enjoyed only with apologies, just as many Negroes have felt that they must apologize for the spirituals. The distinction between "classical" and "popular" was, in short, felt necessarily and in all cases to coincide with the one fundamental distinction between good and bad.

Snobbery, of course, partly accounted for this fallacy, but it had a certain amount of excuse. From about the end of the Civil War to the late nineties, American popular music had suffered a dismal slump. The unconscious humor of the lyrics had been the redeeming feature of the songs. With the rise of ragtime and various more capable composers there came an improvement, but the music, judged by unsentimental standards, remained pretty bad. Ragtime, the most convenient, purely American, popular technique, was conceived and set down so as to be playable by virtual illiterates. Its thin stock harmonies, for instance, might almost be numbered on one's fingers, and where the tunes showed inventive ability it tended to be canceled by the despicable poverty of their apparel. But these facts merely went to demonstrate the more clearly that the fallacy needed knocking down.

It was Jerome Kern who struck the first blow by producing a series of songs, many of them recognizably American in spirit and treatment, which, besides having good tunes, exhibited sound, self-respecting, and musicianly workmanship. The second blow came with the rise of jazz, concerned, in its most prominent aspect, with technique. This necessitated Tin Pan Alley's importing trained musicians as arrangers; the success of jazz resulted in its invading the musical comedies, thus bringing popular music into an atmosphere where better work is expected, or at least tolerated, than in songs written solely for the trade. But more than any other one person, George Gershwin has reminded his hearers that the division between good and bad cuts across all others. This, it is submitted, is a valuable reminder. If the fallacy to the contrary was a vulgar one, it was—and to a less degree still is—powerful.

It is not that Gershwin has written good music; the present writer thinks it good, but the point is that, good or not, it is American, in the popular idiom, and good enough to show that first-rate music, even in the longer forms, can be written in that idiom by anyone with the requisite training and natural gifts.

This demonstration Gershwin has achieved, in the first place, by perhaps 150 songs. Not all of them are good ones. Some that present their writer's inspiration at its height suffer from the real or fancied necessity of writing, for musical comedies, only in the narrow forms desired by dance orchestras. Yet they are engagingly cast in their constricted mold and so widely appealing as to make it unnecessary to cite the titles of the best, from "I Was so Young" to "The Man I Love." They show a pride of workmanship, an attention to detail (*vide* the invention spent on their introductory measures and on the two bars at their close), and an avoidance of harmonic cliches, qualities which were unknown to popular music a few years ago, and which are being emulated by others to the general good of the art.

It is, however, through his adventures in the concert halls that this composer has done most to discredit the vulgar fallacy, because these adventures were not only well, but spectacularly, carried off. The "Rhapsody in Blue" demonstrated in fifteen minutes that jazz is independent of the fox-trot rhythm and form, and is therefore available for experiments in the longer forms. This lesson was driven home by the piano concerto in F, a less compact and balanced work, less happy in its orchestration (Gershwin's first attempt), but rich, if not too rich, in pleasing themes. It reveals a unity that signifies the same devoted care and thought as do the best of the songs. "135th Street," wrongly labeled a jazz opera, suggested little new save, for a moment during the "Pagliacci" burlesque which formed its prologue, the possibilities of the more savage and wry-mouthed jazz for conveying a sense of tragedy.

It is not to be imagined that by "An American in Paris" (presented December 13 by Mr. Damrosch and the Philharmonic Symphony) Gershwin darkly planned to damage fallacies and confute snobs. Obviously he had immensely enjoyed working out his little story of a Yankee, as simple in his peculiar way as Mallarmé's faun, harmlessly trotting the streets, eluding the taxis and the museums, sitting down for a bock at a boulevard table, getting the homesickness blues, getting over them, and toddling happily off again. That, and the anticipation of exciting a sympathetic pleasure in the conceit, probably measured the composer's main motive for putting his American on paper; and his hope was justified by the joy with which the audience welcomed his creation.

But it is as important to the purposes of the present article to point out that "An American in Paris" represents an advance in Gershwin's ability both to get what he wants out of a symphony orchestra (no mean problem), and so to transform and combine his themes as to make a living organism of the sum total. It has a personality apart from Gershwin's own, which his concerto had not; the Rhapsody had one, but it was partly the gift of the arranger, Grofé. It is questionable whether the brilliant concert-notes supplied by Mr. Deems Taylor were as much a blessing as a curse at the christening; not only did they supply a far more elaborate, and so distracting, "program" than the composer had suspected to be applicable to his piece, but by doing this, Mr. Taylor enabled the critics to sit back and relax, comfortable in the knowledge that they could fill their space in next day's editions with a rehash of Taylor. Most of them did, even to the extent of repeating Mr. Taylor's obvious error in identifying a certain music-hall piece, quoted in the score, as a maxixe. The ill-disposed critics, who are still numerous, added a rebuke to the conductor for including this light (and American?) work in the same program with Franck's D-minor symphony; the unshocked added a kind word or so; but scarcely anywhere was it pointed out that Gershwin had gained considerably in his knowledge of how to write long compositions for large orchestras. Assuming

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that he knows more of musical theory than many professional theorists know of jazz, he is largely self-taught, and is under no financial necessity of continuing his education. Every proof that he is, nevertheless, taking the trouble to do so, is highly important evidence for critics to take into consideration in attempting to anticipate what he may yet accomplish.

Such a prediction is difficult. That he will write great music, his work to date does not promise. Its spirit is vital but not profound; not elevated, but humorous, witty, ribald; on occasion, pathetic or of a cool, blue melancholy, but not tragic. It is the product of an immense gusto for life, work, and appreciation, which, it may be expected, will not quickly fade. It will continue to arouse pleased surprise in the minds of intelligent hearers, including serious if not solemn musicians, over the world; to raise the general level of American popular music, and to obliterate a snobbish, vulgar, and potent error.

Sentiments for a Dedication

By ARCHIBALD MacLEISH

Not to you
Unborn generations
Irrefutable judges of what must be true
Infallible reviewers of neglected reputations

("Posterity"
The same critics
Professor Phlip in Doctor Phlap's goatee
The usual majority of female metics

Also the young men
More of the same kidney
Kicking the academic Ass again
Restoring Rimbaud to the rank of dear Sir Philip Sidney)

Not to you (though Christ
Is my sure witness
The fame I've got has not in all respects sufficed
And rediscovery would have its fitness)

Not to you these fine books
I address the living
I'll take (I've taken) the blank brutal looks
You keep your sympathetic too late learned too generous forgiving

I speak to those of my own time
To none after
I say Remember me Remember this one rhyme
When first the dead come round me with their whispering laughter

Those of one time
They will be there together
As ancient sailors who have seen the Great Dog climb
And the south isles whiten in the stormy weather
They will be there together in those faceless lands
And one will name that winter when the limb
Bloomed in the deep snow They will move their wavering hands
They will remember and cry out to him

They will be there together in that sunless noon
As ancient home-come sailors who have known the Horn
They will remind each other of the moon
They will recall the west wind in the corn

O living men remember me receive me among you

This Week

Wall-Mottoes by Henry Ford

IN an authorized interview with Fay Leone Faurote, Henry Ford* has recently summed up his views of modern life. One cannot doubt that the interviewer accurately transcribed Mr. Ford's thought and even his words. Only the philosopher himself would dare defy with such complete unconcern the ordinary conventions of consecutive arrangement, or range over so wide and varied a terrain. Mr. Ford talks about homes and household machinery; about farms and farm machinery; about food and the possibility of repairing bodies as one does boilers; about thinking, morals, education, war and peace, leisure, the money system, pride, government finance, talkers and doers, poverty, prophets, the fear of change, and any number of other subjects. He needs nothing more than an initial letter to launch him on a new train of thought. He thinks in dots and dashes, and expresses himself in a succession of epigrams and aphorisms, many of them rich in simple wisdom, others possessed only of simplicity.

From the book as a whole one gains a picture of Henry Ford's mind, a busy, scattered mind which stoutly believes that only applied thinking is useful. ("Thinking which does not connect with constructive action becomes a disease.") His philosophy may perhaps be condensed in these words: Life is governed by certain universal laws—he insists on universal laws—which determine what is right and useful. Ignore those laws and your efforts will fail; follow them and you will succeed. New ways of doing things are not to be feared. If they succeed, they are right. "Don't be afraid of the changing order." Don't oppose progress. Pride is a bad thing because it makes men resist new methods; " . . . a man given to pride is usually proud of the wrong thing." The application of power to industry has revolutionized our ways of life. All right; welcome the new ways. They create comforts and better labor conditions and higher wages and more leisure. Leisure used to be "regarded as lost time." We know now that leisure creates health, profits, and "a better product." "There is a law which definitely relates leisure to economic well-being." The Power Age—we should not call it the Machine Age—will also bring about the abolition of poverty. And it will put an end to interna-

* "My Philosophy of Industry," Coward-McCann. $1.50.

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tional strife. "The motion picture with its universal language, the airplane with its speed, and the radio with its coming international program—these will soon bring the whole world to a complete understanding." "To my mind there is little difference between an international problem and a local one. . . . It is just as easy to think big as it is to think in small and limited ways." "Political boundaries and political opinions don't really make much difference. It is the economic condition which really forces change and compels progress."

Thus Henry Ford, in his role of philosopher. It is easy to dismiss these simplifications. Mr. Ford "thinks big" with the utmost nonchalance; and he is not concerned with the minutiae of social-reform programs. He does not bother to tell us how the application of power to industry is to accomplish the millennium he outlines. But perhaps that is not his job. His machines have helped to make a new social and physical world. His methods have helped to create a new economic system and new theories to match. If he cannot also invent coherent programs of social change he may perhaps be excused. It can at least be said that such programs will have to be devised from the materials that he has given us.

Since the temptation to quote the wall-mottoes that comprise Mr. Ford's philosophy is quite irresistible, I may as well close with a few of his thoughts on the pertinent subject of prophets, true and false:

> The false prophet is usually an honest gentleman whose main error is in posing as a prophet. One fundamental difference between him and the true prophet is in the matter of popularity. The false prophet cannot live without it, the other must. . . . People who try to understand only the immediate times are somewhat behind the times. . . . Hidden in today is a root of distant tomorrows, and it is the man who knows the coming tomorrows who really sees most of life. . . . Life is a river which constantly changes its course, and the way of understanding is to follow this river—not the dried-up and deserted river-bed.

FREDA KIRCHWEY

We Make Iron in Birmingham

By KARL C. HARRISON

We make iron in Birmingham.
Damn the rest:
We make iron.

We fling up noises that shriek in the sky;
We glut the clouds with smoke,
And the sun filters faintly through.

Our cats, and sparrows, and buildings are smutty.
Our trees stand naked and black,
Like bony Negro women.

We don't seem to mind the quiet moon
That eases across the tops of the buildings;
Nor the sun that sets soft down the L&N tracks.
We don't seem to mind.

We make iron in Birmingham.
Damn the rest.

Books

A Biography of Britain

The History of British Civilization. By Esmé Wingfield-Stratford. Harcourt, Brace and Company. Two volumes. $12.

VERY few of those who may chance to read this review will be acquainted with any of Mr. Wingfield-Stratford's previous writings, though he has "to his credit," as the phrase goes, half a dozen volumes, including a history of British patriotism and a collection of poems on India. The present work, by far his most ambitious and important undertaking, is the first to be published in this country. It runs to well over half a million words, which the publishers have compressed into two attractive and not over-bulky volumes. The author, we are told, has devoted nearly ten years to its preparation, and despite a scholarship that is almost ostentatiously unobtrusive—there is no bibliography and the citation of authorities is very rare—it is apparent that the range of his reading is extraordinarily wide. Even more obvious is his mastery of the English language.

His purpose was to write a popular and at the same time reliable history of British civilization, steering a middle course between the type of history that specialists write for each other and that which journalists write for the public. He believes that modern historical research has been of little use, so far, to the world at large, and he is convinced that without an adequate knowledge of the past man cannot make that adaptation to his environment in the machine age upon which his survival depends. The author's opinion of the historical enterprises of journalists may be warranted, but he is a little hard on the specialists in suggesting that they are responsible for disintegrating the living unity of history—as if they had shoved an historically complete Humpty Dumpty off the wall. This is probably to be explained by failure to distinguish between history as a record of events and history as the events themselves, a failure which, as Professor Shotwell has pointed out, has been productive of much confusion of thought. In the record of events there is no living unity to be disrupted, and such unity as may be inherent in the events themselves even the most highly specialized researcher cannot destroy.

Mr. Wingfield-Stratford defines the history of civilization as "the biography of mankind, presented in all its length and breadth and depth as a living unity," and his attempt to deal with his tremendous subject comprehensively and impartially is worthy of all praise. Politics, law, social customs, agriculture, commerce, industry, science, invention, and the fine arts all come within his purview, and upon all of them he has much that is stimulating to say. He approaches history from the point of view of the social critic, and his interpretation of motive often shows keen psychological insight. The reader who possesses a considerable knowledge of history will find a great deal of food for thought in these volumes, and no student of any phase of English history can afford to pass them by. They are not, it should be said, for beginners. The author is not obscure in the sense of failing to make his meaning clear, but he is frequently allusive and would often be unintelligible even to a reader who could follow without difficulty Professor Trevelyan's brilliant compromise between a textbook and a treatise.

Yet with all gratitude to the author for what he has done—and the reviewer for one is genuinely grateful to him—it must be confessed that he has no mature interpretation or consistent philosophy of history. He professes his faith in free will, in man's power to shape his future in the light of his past, yet on several occasions he uses the language of determinism.

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He announces his intention of letting the facts speak for themselves "in the faith that the truth, followed humbly to the end, will be its own best interpreter," but telling the truth means, for him, seeing beyond the phenomena to "the mental and spiritual processes of which these are but casual manifestations." Of course he relates many facts, but he distinctly does not let them speak for themselves. His book is essentially an interpretative commentary on the facts. Being a Platonic idealist, he has a good deal to say about souls, individual and collective, and souls are matters of taste, not matters of fact. England, Ireland, and India have souls, though I don't recall that one is attributed to the United States. Much, too, is said of permanent race traits, though there are the best of reasons for thinking that no such things exist—except in that realm to which only Platonists can penetrate. The author sees far, indeed, beyond the phenomena when he makes John Bull disembark from Hengist's galley, and brings Simon de Montfort to grief because he exemplified the qualities of the Latin temperament. Any use of history as a vehicle for the historian's own preconceived ideas he strongly deprecates, yet in a reference to pragmatism he shows himself to be prejudiced, unfair, ignorant, and flippant. He describes this philosophy as "cynicism couched in academic jargon," which is not a hopeful point of attack; and when he says that according to pragmatism we ought to believe in any proposition if we find that such belief serves an "acceptable purpose," "entirely irrespective of the trifling consideration whether or not it happens to be true," his irony misses fire. For the pragmatist has only to point out to him that pragmatism affirms that absolute truth, of which he is evidently thinking, cannot be known.

Morley said of Mill's essay on Liberty that the reading of it added a cubit to a man's stature. Mr. Wingfield-Stratford's "History of British Civilization" does not belong in this class, but it will provoke much discussion and deserve the very considerable attention that it is sure to receive.

ROBERT LIVINGSTON SCHUYLER

Seven Against the Law

Seven Brothers. By Alexis Kivi. Translated by Alex Matson. Coward-McCann. $2.50.

SIXTY years ago Alexis Kivi's "Seven Brothers" burgeoned on the Finnish branch of the great world tree of letters, but only recently has it been offered as Finland's ambassadorial gift to the nations. Within the last few years it has been published in Swedish, German, French, and, finally, English translations, and I have no doubt that before long these seven lusty brothers of Finland will be known to other readers of other languages. A book thoroughly native to its soil, steeped to richness in native folk-lore and legend and customs, which at the same time strikes the native note in other soils, makes for racial understanding and a sense of racial kinship of which we cannot have too much, and of which we have unfortunately all too little. It is at once a child's book and a man's book—best test of all for a good book; it is a rollicking, lusty tale which, oddly enough, reads at times like the adventures of seven herculean gods engaged not only in the task of building a new world but in the vaster effort of achieving a modicum of understanding during the process of creation. So, as we reckon time, it is a "timeless" book. It might have been written yesterday or tomorrow or a thousand years ago. And, like all true folk romance made thick with old tradition, it will be fresh and "modern" a thousand years hence. It is not too soon, in this first paragraph, to speak of the virile English translation of this Finnish classic. Poured into the channel of another language, the tale flows free and strong. Vigorous idiom matches vigorous idiom unimpeded by stilted, unclever recasting of vernacular.

Like the Great Bear up in heaven,
Jukola has brothers seven,

and these brothers seven had a wise forbear. Far, far away, "at the first great settlement of boundaries," he had accepted as his share of land a forest ravaged by fire, and had therefore received seven times the area of his neighbors. He called this mighty holding Jukola Farm, and by the time the sons of his sons of his sons came into their inheritance, the dense forests had grown again over most of the ancestral land.

Bereft of their father, one of the great "long hunters," the brothers had tumbled up to maturity, unlettered and undisciplined, until, at their mother's death, they faced the forbidding world, which was for them the village rector with his rigid law that all the youth of the village must read or sit in the stocks and die unwed. They faced, too, among themselves a "headless body" and reluctantly vowed obedience to their eldest, Juhani. This involved, as it developed, disobedience to outer authority, for Juhani provoked their common revolt against the laws of their little world. Two days' struggle with their A B C books settled that affair. "In the matter of reading," said Juhani, "we have God's own laws and regulations on our side, which rise against any attempt. Look you, already in our mother's womb He gave us such hard heads that it is impossible for us to learn to read." And on the third morning, taking inventory of the results of revolt, they decided, as one, on flight. Insulted and injured by the men of Toukola, they had retaliated in horrid kind; they had been refused, all seven, by Venla, daughter of Mother Pinewood; by negligence their great bathhouse had burned down while they tended their wounds; and the stocks waited for them on the coming Sunday. They, therefore, rented Jukola Farm to the village tanner for ten long years, and set out for the furthermost edge of their holdings, to Ilvesjärvi Lake on the side of Impivaara, to build a new world. They took with them Killi and Kiiski, the fierce Jukola dogs, their one-eyed horse Valko, the doughty Jukola cock, an iron cauldron, seven spoons, and the old farm cat.

These are the seven "world builders," in the order of their ages from twenty-five to eighteen Hot-tempered Juhani with no reason to guide him in the exercise of authority; Tuomas the wonderer of the seven, "grave, manly, and strong"; Aapo his twin, called the just, who "holds up a mirror to us"; Simeoni the moralist, who "fluttered the wings of his soul a bit too much," who nagged the most and slept the least; Timo, fire-maker, proverb-quoter, and cook; Lauri his twin, molder of clay, who first of all the brothers realized one day that "God had once created him a thinking human being"; and Eero, youngest of the seven, at once the petted and the picked on, "small as a dwarf and swift and keen as lightning." Diverse temperaments from which might spring a new and lawless world.

But law, inner or outer, is never to be evaded, and the mad young Titans discover this cosmic fact at Impivaara, as adventure follows on adventure, and of wisdom tiny seed on seed, until they succumb at last to the necessity of hammering in on their unfurrowed brains the alphabet. "What," breathed Aapo, "if we were to start this great work together, without resting until it is done!" Not only do the thick-skulled rascals decide on this all but impossible undertaking, but they consent, as final discipline, to sit under the teaching of their little Eero, youngest, but, alas, brightest of the seven. And finally, at the end of ten years, learned men all, they set out from Impivaara to take possession once again of the old Jukola Farm.

No wonder "Seven Brothers" is a Finnish classic; it has all the qualities to make it that. But Kivi caught more than the local racial note; beneath—and not too far beneath—the local color of lore and legend and merely native custom pulses the absurdity, the comedy, the tragedy, of the race itself, which the reader may find for himself, and so double the bubbling humor of the story.

EDNA KENTON

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Behind the Censorship

You Can't Print That! The Truth Behind the News. 1918-1928. By George Seldes. Payson and Clarke. $4.

MR. SELDES, having resigned from the staff of the Chicago *Tribune,* in whose foreign service he has been since 1918, feels that now, at last, it can be told—"the truth," as the subtitle states, "behind the news." And we learn from his book, which is nearly five hundred pages long, a good deal about Fascist and Soviet censorship and about the Mussolini terror, more about Iraq and France and the Eastern War, and a lot about our policy in Mexico and what Mr. Seldes thinks of it. Mr. Seldes leaves no doubt in anyone's mind that our Mexican policy during the past decade has not been one to inspire the confidence of Mexicans in our good-will.

For the most part the title "You Can't Print That" hardly covers the contents of this book—indeed incident after incident which Mr. Seldes records goes to prove that precisely the opposite is true, that despite censorship at home and censorship abroad the American journalist reporting on foreign Powers (I imagine that Washington correspondents don't enjoy the same *carte blanche* from their editors) can print almost anything he chooses. But Mr. Seldes gives a vivid picture of the difficulties which surround the foreign correspondent, difficulties deriving from censorships, propaganda, and corruption, and it is refreshing to read so spirited a defense of journalism. The journalist is a much-maligned person. I suppose there is no more universal American credo than the one "You can't believe a word you read in the newspapers," and when Mr. Seldes says that most American correspondents are doing their best to get accurate facts, he says what my own experience confirms as the truth.

Of course, it isn't the whole case. While it is doubtless a fact that American journalists are wary of propaganda, are willing to risk offending the powers that be in any country for the sake of publishing what they know to be true, and are often recklessly courageous in adopting any method to transmit their story—and Mr. Seldes has some thrilling tales to tell about his own narrow escapes in pursuit of news—still, the American correspondent, encouraged by the character of our press, is far too likely so to place his emphasis that, although accurate as to facts, the verisimilitude of the whole picture is distorted. In the reports from most countries catastrophe is of greater news value than undramatic progress, and the outwardly dramatic event is reported, while the real drama of events is suppressed through lack of interest on the part of the public, or understanding on the part of the journalist. All one needs is eyes in one's head and the ability to write communicable language to describe a revolution or a riot. To report—for instance—the revolution in Vienna, July, 1927, required of Mr. Seldes, in addition to these qualities, fast legs, determination, and great physical courage, but the reward was a cabled "Good work." An analysis of the forces which produced that—or any other—particular revolt would have been drier reading, but more illuminating of the whole situation in Austria, of which this revolt was but a symptom. Why did the police fire upon this demonstration—the police who in 1921 quelled a more savage riot without firing a shot or killing a single person? Mr. Seldes may have answered this critical question in his reports, but he doesn't do it here.

Every American journalist who has worked in Europe will want to shake hands with Mr. Seldes for speaking out about the American diplomatic service in its relations to the press. When Mr. Seldes says that most American ambassadors are extremely delinquent in representing American interests, in cooperating with the American press, and in watching for the safety of American subjects, he says what everyone who has represented an American newspaper abroad knows to be true. The American newspaperman abroad is a pariah in his own embassy—with a very few exceptions. I know of many American journalists, of the highest personal and professional status, who have been the honored guests of nearly every embassy except their own. The story which Mr. Seldes tells of the murder of Mr. De Mott in the Ruhr, and the careless dismissal of the case by American diplomatic representatives with the words "Nothing to bother about—the man was a Bolshevik" is shocking, and pretty true to form. Mr. Seldes compares the attitude of the American diplomatic representatives with that of the French, who got "a million gold francs and a salute for the death of one of their men in Berlin." And he might have compared the way the British acted when Frederick Voigt, the correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian,* was arrested, charged with bolshevism, in the Ruhr. The British Government preferred to judge for itself whether Mr. Voigt was a Bolshevik, and insisted on this right very strongly. Had Mr. Voigt been an American the chances are he would not be alive today.

Mr. Seldes performed a service in showing up the Fascist terror before he was expelled, and the detailed account of his controversies with Mussolini's government is fascinating reading. Curiously enough, Italy is one country where catastrophe is not—relatively speaking—news. It is quite true that no adequate investigation of the Italian terror has yet been made for the American press. No one in the world really knows how Mussolini's government handles its political prisoners, and there are a dozen American newspapermen with sufficient courage and cavalierness to undertake the dangerous attempt to find out. Here is a real "stunt" for some newspaper.

And when Mr. Seldes deprecates, in no uncertain fashion, the tendency of American capital to rush into countries where conditions are extremely unstable, and where the principles of government violate every expectation of permanent stability, he says what almost every foreign correspondent believes.

DOROTHY THOMPSON

World Poetry

An Anthology of World Poetry. Edited by Mark Van Doren. Albert and Charles Boni. $5.

MR. VAN DOREN'S anthology should be bought, placed beside one's bed, and referred to at leisure, preferably at decent intervals of at least a week. I like to think that nobody will do what this reviewer has been obliged to do—namely, read the book through from cover to cover, an experience comparable to walking through an art gallery several miles long and examining successively with some degree of attention the work of innumerable artists, represented, for the most part, not by original canvases but by reproductions in black and white.

No one, I say, should be obliged to do this. Yet I apprehend that a certain section of the reading public will mistake "An Anthology of World Poetry" for another tabloid culture-compendium, swallow it feverishly, and acquire, not culture, but a frightful and fully deserved headache.

It should be said at once that the volume is nothing of the sort. It is an honest attempt to select the best of the available English translations from some fifteen ancient and modern languages and arrange them in chronological sequence from the Thirty-fifth Century B. C. to the Twentieth Century A. D. Over four hundred poets are represented by more than thirteen hundred poems. The book is well printed on thin paper, and 274 of its pages are devoted to English and American poetry, all of it good—better of course, than the translations.

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Any one who has essayed the task of recreating in English the effect of a good poem in a foreign language knows how pale a shadow his best efforts are likely to bring forth. What it amounts to is that the translator writes a new poem in his own language, using another man's inspiration, mood, and idea. At best it is a kind of qualified and inhibited creation, and, as Mr. Van Doren points out in his preface, it does not give us what primary creation gives us.

What it does give us—what the English and American translators who contribute to this volume have given us—is first, poetry-in-English of some, and occasionally great, merit; second, certain clues to the spiritual preoccupations and attitudes of other peoples, both ancient and modern. For example, we note that for nearly three centuries, from Ciullo d'Alcamo to Tasso, the Renaissance Italian poets rivaled one another in writing variants of a single poem entitled To My Lady. It seems very unlikely that these chivalric gestures had anything to do with the actual state of their feelings regarding the lady in question. They seem rather to be a part of the full-dress paraphernalia of a social and political personality; not love, but the theater of love; not poetry, but an artificial contemporary concept of poetry. This suspicion is deepened when one remembers that Renaissance Italy was essentially a pagan society of knaves, murderers, adulterers, men of genius, political and artistic mummers and careerists, the realities of whose personal lives are best exhibited by the prose of Benvenuto Cellini, Casanova, and Boccaccio. Why Mr. Van Doren included so much of this tedious stuff—much of it translated into the pseudo-simplicities and pseudo-naivetes of Dante Gabriel Rossetti—one can't imagine.

Here. however, the reviewer is merely confessing a prejudice, which might well be coupled with another, to wit: that the Hindus seem both more honest and more intense about love than any other people. Even in translation the Chauraspanchasika (translated as "Black Marigolds" by E. Powys Mather) is a great love poem. In the original it is quite possibly the greatest love poem in any language. Incidentally , Mr. Mather, by his translations from the Sanskrit, Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese, is revealed as a sensitive and profound artist—a distinguished poet in his own right if he had done nothing else.

For various reasons the great Greeks are less impressive in translation than one might expect. One of the reasons is Sir Gilbert Murray, from whose lush stanzas one turns, with a sense of relief, to the chaste and lovely verbal sculptures of H. D. Exception should be made, of course, of the "Anthology," that marvelous legacy of wit and wisdom, so lovingly cherished by a long line of distinguished poets from William Shakespeare to E. A. Robinson.

Since for the most part the translations are not new, the chief value and interest of this volume is that it combines extensiveness with taste to a degree not heretofore achieved. As already noted, one questions a good many of Mr. Van Doren's inclusions, especially since his announced criterion is the value of the translation as poetry-in-English. I doubt if this criterion has been literally observed, and perhaps there would have been a certain loss if it had. Its violation (assuming that the anthologist nodded occasionally under the ardors of what must have been a formidable job) serves, for example, to renew one's suspicion that nothing very important happened in French poetry between Villon and Baudelaire; that William Morris was a great dilettante but not a great poet; that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was neither a great poet or a great dilettante; that Louis Untermeyer transcribes the shadow of Heine with amazing accuracy but frequently misses the substance.

Usually, however, one feels that Mr. Van Doren's taste is both catholic and distinguished, and that it has been alertly exercised. Particularly is this true when the anthologist comes to complete his volume with a necessarily limited selection from the work of English and American poets. This section constituted in itself a distinguished and useful anthology of the best poetry in the language. Few of Mr. Van Doren's inclusions are likely to be questioned; some omissions, of course, may be regretted, but are presumably to be explained by lack of space. The contemporary Americans represented are Santayana, Robinson, Amy Lowell, Frost, Sandburg, Lindsay, Ezra Pound, H. D., Robinson Jeffers, T. S. Eliot, and Edna St. Vincent Millay. These are surely the right names, and Mr. Van Doren has made excellent selections from their work.

JAMES RORTY.

Lo, the Poor Haitian

The Magic Island. By W. B. Seabrook. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

> Maman Celie handed me a copper coin and instructed me to place it on the packet. And now, before it was tied up, she told me to make a prayer (wish). I hesitated, then stood with both arms stretched straight out before me, palms downward, as I had seen them do, and said in English:
>
> "May Papa Legba, Maîtresse Ezilée, and the Serpent protect me from misrepresenting these people, and give me power to write honestly of their mysterious religion, for all living faiths are sacred."

BOOKS on the Negro peoples of the Caribbean region appear to be attaining a popularity that is quite understandable. That there are many elements in their lives that are attractive to any "first articulate white man" with a facile style and the ability to scoop up what is on the surface is obvious. The pity of it is that either by temperament or training those who have written seem to be unfitted to do justice to the peoples whom they visit. And this book, like others of its kind, is a work of injustice. The blurb does not do justice to the book, the publicity does not do justice to the author, the author does not do justice to the people of whom he writes, and the illustrator, with his exaggeratedly gruesome drawings, does injustice to all.

That the paragraph I quoted above characterizes Mr. Seabrook's book will be apparent to anyone who reads it. There can be do doubt of his good intentions. He tries to keep his vow in describing the *paysans* and their ceremonies, the Occupation and its roads and sanitary regulations and prejudices, and the upper-caste Haitians and their *politesse*. But his straining for "atmosphere" in a land where all is atmosphere and where depth of perception in stating the facts most surely conveys it negates his attempt. The net result, one fears, is another sensational exploitation of the lives and customs of the Caribbean Negro peoples.

I do not wish to decry Mr. Seabrook's efforts in their entirety. In those places where he is recounting anecdotes, such as the description of the climb up the Morne la Selle or his account of the cock-fight on La Gonave, he is interesting. He is an accomplished raconteur, and where he loses his self-consciousness he writes incisively, humorously, and without that hysterical quality which comes when he describes the religious ceremonies of the people who live in the hills. Even those descriptions show that he has a keen eye, and the excerpts from his notebook, in which personal observations are recounted and he apparently does not feel the need of introducing the falsely dramatic, demonstrate him to be a conscientious workman. But Voodoo is Voodoo, and writers who unite mysticism and journalism must play up to its reputation of being something dark and mysterious.

The pity is that with all the opportunities Mr. Seabrook had for observation, his results show a lamentable willingness to accept surface values. He tells us he knew Maman Celie,

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the *mamaloi,* or priestess of the cult, intimately, and lived at her house. What were some of the normal aspects of her everyday life? Did he never ask her what she thought about her religious experiences? What, in the final analysis, was the purpose of the ceremonies which he witnessed? What was their place in the entire cycle of Voodoo rites? What was the significance of Mr. Seabrook's being initiated into the cult? Protection? Gain? Control over spirits? The privilege of witnessing the ceremonies? Why did Catherine and the goat mystically unite their beings before the sacrifice? Answers to questions such as these would take us beneath the surface and tell us some of the essentially real aspects of this cult which, when explained, will fascinate by simple statement.

Illustrations of this sort of superficiality are endless. Let us take the case of the *culte des morts,* and especially the unfortunate *zambé.* "To my friend Holly I went one day concerning vague tales of a witchcraft cult in the peninsula, called *le culte des morts*—hoping that, if it existed, he might put me in touch with it. He was surprised that I should have heard of it." The surprise is rather that he had not heard more of it. On the boat to Haiti it and human sacrifice are the first things of which one is told when one mentions the natives. The *zambé* is the exhumed body of a person considered dead. The person who digs up this body has a valuable aid. The *zambé* works all the time, he never looks up, he never speaks, he is a soulless body. He must never be fed on salt, or he will return to the grave. Naturally it is considered a dreadful thing to have happen, and apparently many a Haitian stabs the bodies of his dead with his machete to be sure death is real, since this defeats the purpose of anyone who wishes to utilize the corpse for such ends. What escaped Mr. Seabrook were some of the implications of this belief which hold practical significance. Everyone in Haiti—that is, every American, almost—will tell you that human flesh is sold in the market-place. So will natives, and so they have testified in the courts. Why? Because it is believed that the master of the *zambé,* if he wishes to do so for any reason, can turn the soulless human body into an animal, a sheep or a goat, slaughter it, and sell its meat. Thus the belief that any meat of this sort may be *zambé*—that is, may be human—and thus comes the perpetuation of the belief. But this is folk-lore, not fact.

I object, too, to his second-hand statement of rumor, with a technique which, although ostensibly one of denial, is essentially that of affirmation. I weary of his references to the constant "booming of the drums" which is at least sufficiently non-continuous so that I never heard them, either during a very brief stay in Haiti or a longer one in Suriname, where the Bush-Negroes are supposed to have the same unending propensity for booming. I regret his utter lack of realization that the apparently free orgy of the dances if analyzed is found to be stylized to the highest degree, so much so that the wonder is in the discipline of the dancers. I, too, saw dances of this sort in the Suriname bush, and I should be the last to deny their terrifying quality, the fascination of their rhythms and songs, the incredible performances of the dancers under a state of auto-hypnosis superinduced by the voice of the gods in the drums. But the miracle is that these men knew not to harm other persons with their machetes, that though they were foaming at the mouth, each performed according to the dictates of the spirit which possessed him—comparable strictly to the Haitian *loi.* I regret, too, the orgiastic emphasis which Mr. Seabrook places on the dances he witnessed. He may be right, but there is grave danger in reading into complex esoteric ceremonies simple erotic explanations drawn from our own life.

Objections pile one on another. The blood-sucking woman is a common character in folk-tales. Why must Mr. Seabrook make it appear that she is a common living phenomenon? Does he not realize that stories, as well as vegetation, grow lush in the tropics? Does he not know that the sacred "thunderstones" of which he speaks are actually artifacts of the prehistoric inhabitants, like others often sacred to Africans themselves? If he does, his failure to mention this in his notes is surprising. His presentation of rhythms is too simple for the complex combined beating of the three drums, and the melodies he gives sound far too European for ceremonial music. One does not sense the essential kindliness, the utter lack of bloodthirstiness, and the entire gentleness of these people in the sensational presentations of rare moments in their lives given by writers such as this. And it is time for a tempered, intelligent presentation of the manner in which they live, one that, staying close to the facts, probing under the surface and eschewing rumor, will make quite as fascinating a tale.

MELVILLE J. HERSKOVITS

Silly Business

American Policy Toward Russia Since 1917. By Frederick Lewis Schuman. International Publishers. $3.75.

WHEN the Russian middle class overthrew the Czar in March, 1917, it took our State Department just four days to recognize the new government. But when Kerensky, on November 1, announced that Russia was worn out, the State Department refused to admit that anything had changed. Kerensky, "with great energy," it said, was organizing Russia to carry on the war. A week later Kerensky fled, and the Soviets came into power. That was more than eleven years ago, but the State Department still pretends to regard Kerensky and his crew as the Government of Russia.

It is an amazing story which Mr. Schuman tells, though he is so solicitous to be fair and to miss no detail of the record that he sometimes misses its drama. Washington at first, along with the bulk of the American press and people, insisted that the Bolsheviks were a gang of incompetent bandits, temporarily holding the Russian capital. The Bolsheviks had not come into power legally, we said, so we could not recognize them. We forgot our own course in March. For a time we maintained *sub rosa* relations with the Soviets while officially refusing to do so. We aided, gently, the various anti-Bolshevik crusades in Siberia, South Russia, and about Archangel, but always upon the theory that we were merely guarding munitions dumps or supplies from armed German prisoners, or something equally inane. It was, perhaps, the Soviet decree repudiating Russia's state debts which did Russo-American relations most harm; when Trotzki, a month later, sought American aid to continue the war against the Germans the State Department was not interested. Meanwhile the angry White refugees were flooding the capitals of Europe with the stupendous campaign of lies which still poisons the mind of the world, culminating in the appealing story of the nationalization of women.

Russia's position in the war, at first apparently all-important, faded into the background. The State Department's final ban on export licenses was not applied until the German war had ended, and the refusal to accept Russian gold persists to this day. Non-recognition continues, though our government no longer publicly denies that the Bolsheviks are in control of Russia. Mr. Schuman finds in the later utterances of our statesmen two excuses for non-recognition: first, the policy of repudiation, which the Russians have repeatedly qualified, and which they have offered to discuss; second, the continuance of international revolutionary propaganda. Mr. Schuman properly refuses to accept Soviet protestations that the Third International is quite distinct from the Russian Government, but he is not alarmed by the Communist movement in this country, and he thinks that our abhorrence of propaganda is a little

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malapropos in a government which conducted anti-Bolshevik propaganda in Russia as long as it saw any hope of success.

There was a need for this book. It is sober and scholarly, and carries the record well into 1928. There is nothing argumentative or emotional about it; but all the author's effort to be impartial cannot conceal his conviction that refusal to recognize the existence of one of the great Powers is silly business. And, of course, it is. LEWIS S. GANNETT

Isadora Duncan

Isadora Duncan's Russian Days and Her Last Years in France. By Irma Duncan and Allan Ross MacDougall. Covici-Friede. $3.50.

The Art of the Dance. By Isadora Duncan. Edited by Sheldon Cheney. Published by Theater Arts, Inc. $7.50.

IT was probably puzzling to many readers of Isadora Duncan's autobiography to find that one who was known the world over as a dancer had so little to say about dancing. Did she really have no interest in her work beyond its immediate relation to herself? We are told in the recent volume on her Russian days by Irma and Allan MacDougall that she was persuaded by friends and publishers alike to write only of her personal adventures. And it is, therefore, from one's own recollection, from the twenty-three essays in "The Art of the Dance," and from her pupils that we must collect the material for judging the creative artist. Many of the essays are sheer poetry, uplifted in tone and beautiful in expression; but they offer little clarification of the art of the dance. They allow you, as Isadora's dancing did, to share her aspirations toward a world set free. In these essays we glimpse a finer personality than in "My Life," but it is the woman herself we see, even here. In every conscious effort that she made—living, writing, teaching, or dancing—she was the inspired apostle of freedom. Her dancing was accidental and unimportant. She herself hated to be called a dancer. Theatricalism was tawdry to her.

> People have never understood my true aim. They have thought that I wished to form a troupe of dancers to perform in the theater. Certainly nothing was farther from my thoughts. Far from wishing to develop theater dancers, I have only hoped to train in my school numbers of children who through dance, music, poetry, and song would express the feelings of the people, with grace and beauty.
>
> All promise for the future I see in a great school where children will learn to dance, to sing, to live for the Wisdom and the Beauty of the world.

She was teaching her children to be free and to be fine and to be natural. That was all she asked for herself, and that was what she was asking for when she moved to musical rhythm.

Isadora Duncan was an ardent, perturbed, and revolutionary soul roused to a passion of rebellion because of inner repressions dating, perhaps, from her childhood. Freedom was her religion and most specifically freedom for the unique woman that was Isadora. Her mother was a musician, she tells us in "My Life," and whereas it takes time and money to develop musical expression in a child, motion, that accompaniment to music, takes neither time nor money, and only the instrument of the body. To her mother's music Isadora could express in movement the depth of her unsatisfied childish heart. What she wanted was release—release from poverty, release from cramped gestures dictated by the ridiculous female clothes of the day, release from the conventions of love and marriage. The finest music rang in her ears and became her stimulus—that and nature. "I am inspired by the movement of the trees, the waves, the snows, by the connection between passion and

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the storm, between the breeze and gentleness . . ." And forever after it was the motion of water and music that counted most of all for her—especially the latter. She disliked piano; only the orchestra with its volume of sound could match Isadora's desire for what she did not have. Her musical taste was superb, because her longings were equal in power to the exultation which the greatest composers evoke.

And so she was the supreme self-expressionist. She became the source of inspiration to artists who were lesser clay. The sculptor, the painter, the poet, the dancer composed out of the richness of her spirit. Isadora Duncan did not compose in the strict sense of the term. Design was sometimes incidental in her movement, but she was more often initiate, priestess, religionist, teacher, aspirant. Because in herself there was depth of emotional energy, her expression was quickening and thrilling to her audiences. She was a personality to whom art was trifling. Some of us who watched this high priestess at her prayers were artists, inspired by her to our own designs; some of us were coreligionists who wanted women to be strong and free, who wanted children to be at all times fresh and beautiful and moving with grace, and as we watched we imagined the millennium at hand; some of us were music lovers whose musical response was deepened by her emotion.

But Isadora was the matrix of the art form, like life itself. We cannot ask for light on the art of the dance from her, even from her book which bears that title. We cannot ask practical questions, as, for instance, how to keep the body supple and poised by technical training; how to design our choreography once the body is the mastered instrument; how to express an idea. We can only ask to be allowed to worship with her the god she worshiped—the god of freedom and defiance. Whatever "art" there was in Isadora's dancing died with Isadora—not because dancing is but a gesture that evaporates in time and space, but because no design made by the mind remains, no definite scheme of procedure, no projected pattern. There remains only the memory of a great woman moved by the manifestations of nature and exalted music and her personal enslavement, moved to be free and to be wholly woman.

But these things cannot be said for her pupils. Her avowed purpose was not to make dancers of her children, but to train them for the "good life," to use Bertrand Russell's phrase. And when they became dancers, she repudiated them. There are more than hints of this in letters published in the book about her Russian days. Of her pupils we can be critical from the standpoint of their dancing; we need not here be confused by the splendor of a personality. Irma[1] captured a little the spirit that was Isadora's because she came with a train of Russian girls divinely young, and wore with dignity the mantle of protective motherhood that Isadora wore. And she again momentarily aroused the hope within us that all children might be free and happy. But aside from this enlivened memory, what can we say of the Duncan tradition of dancing that these dancers exemplify? It is dancing for young girls and children. It is lyrical and lovely and full of grace. Its best rhythm is the waltz—Schubert, Brahms, and Chopin. Sometimes it palls a little by excessive repetition; sometimes it becomes sentimental, especially when done by the older girls, Anna and Irma—partly because the technical training is not severe enough to correct the awkwardnesses of those less young. Certainly the garlands and rose petals used by Anna[2] and the three Elizabeth Duncan dancers[3] are a cheap and sentimental note. Neither Anna's nor Irma's interpretations of the vast range of symphonic music have any value in my eyes; both mind and sufficient spirit are lacking; design and emotion are turgid.

[1] Isadora Duncan dancers directed by Irma Duncan. Manhattan Opera House and Wallack's Theater, December 27-January 27.
[2] Carnegie Hall, January 15, assisted by forty-two members of the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra.
[3] Booth Theater, January 27.

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The delicate waltzes, born of Isadora's passion for the uninhibited child, are the finest flower of her dancing as an art—these and some of the revolutionary groupings. In the latter, historical fact formed a background of reality; the creative impulse within Isadora was drawn out of herself and she projected stirring dance pattern.

For the rest little remains; but it must not be forgotten that Isadora in her persistent struggles to gain freedom for herself and for others succeeded also in influencing and modifying the too formal aspects of certain phases of the dance. It undoubtedly meant little to her that largely through her influence Diaglieff, Fokine, Nijinski, and Massine were able to create ballets with new feeling. It meant less perhaps to her that her first appearance in Berlin started a dance-ferment in Germany, so that now for the first time there is a definite German school, however far removed it may be from her ideas.

But the truth is, Isadora Duncan did not like the dance. As created by humble human beings it bored her, because in her beat the rhythms of the gods. RUTH PICKERING

Prophets of Today

Living in the Twentieth Century. By Harry Elmer Barnes. Bobbs-Merrill Company. $3.50.

The Twilight of the American Mind. By Walter B. Pitkin. Simon and Schuster. $3.

READERS of Dr. Barnes's previous books know that he possesses amazing erudition, vigorous critical powers, and a style that rivals the best pamphleteering efforts of H. G. Wells. In manner, "Living in the Twentieth Century" represents a synthesis of all these qualities. In content, too, the book achieves a synthesis, being a comprehensive and integrated account of the social forces which have transformed civilization during the last hundred years.

In his opening chapter Dr. Barnes summarizes—with especial reference to the mid-Victorian era—the social environment, outlook, and problems which characterized the lives of even the better-educated classes of the last century. Sixty years ago the vast majority of "educated" men still believed in the Genesis creation myth, still believed that Holy Writ offered the last word by way of moral guidance. Natural science and applied science were still in adolescence. The social sciences were in the throes of birth. Education was designed to inculcate the Christian Epic and to prepare a privileged class to live apart.

Having described the intellectual climate of mid-Victorian civilization, Dr. Barnes mentions briefly the more significant aspects of the advance of pure science during the last fifty years and discusses the alterations of outlook which this scientific advance necessarily implies. He devotes four chapters to the great technological progress of recent times, showing how completely material civilization has been transformed by applied science, by inventive genius, and by the industrial revolution. The book as a whole constitutes a brilliant sociological history of recent times and cultural inventory of the present age.

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All this is very well, say the prophets of eugenics, but it isn't enough. Instead of a Grade B Utopia, let us have a Grade A Utopia. Instead of merely abolishing poverty, let us also abolish mediocrity. To most of us, I suppose, such a goal has seemed immeasurably remote, yet wholly desirable. Not so, says Dr. Pitkin. There are not enough suitable jobs in America even now for the "Best Minds" among us, and the prospect for the future employment of such minds is rapidly getting worse.

Dr. Pitkin states this startling thesis in forceful and entertaining fashion. He discusses the nature of intelligence, defining his term Best Minds as that class of adults who surpass ninety-nine out of every hundred in mental ability of the sort which our schools and colleges favor and foster. He then proceeds to a survey of "the various opportunities now existing in the eight Grand Divisions of the World's Work, namely, Manufacturing, Business, Finance, the Professions, the Arts, Science, Government, and Agriculture." Result: He finds some 613,800 Best Minds in America today with adequate employment for only about 175,000. Thanks to applied science and modern organization, one Best Mind may now direct the work of thousands of unskilled, and even of skilled workers. And this tendency toward centralization of authority is bound to continue. Fifty years from now, Dr. Pitkin humorously suggests, "some quiet spinster with a world radio telephone at her elbow and an automatic statistical computer in her office" will handle more big business in one hour than the present type of high-powered executive gets through in a week. The more intelligently the world is run, the less brains will be required to run it. Best Minds in America are now increasing out of all proportion to the growth of the population. By 1975 the crisis will have become acute: America will be suffering from an oversupply of brains. What will these superfluous intellectuals find to do? Dr. Pitkin just doesn't know.

CHARLES LEE SNIDER

Music as Philosophy

Beethoven: His Spiritual Development. By J. W. N. Sullivan. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.

THIS is one of the books on music that come to a reviewer all too rarely but, when they come, compensate him for the others and reconcile him to a miserable career. Most of such books are English, and what sets them apart is their fine intellectual quality. In England there are writers on music who have first-rate minds; and here is one of the best minds in England, a distinguished scientific philosopher, who, occupied with a problem that is at once philosophical and musical, displays a first-rate critical insight into music. His argument, strangely, is not perfectly ordered, nor is the book concisely written, but its contents, stated with a deceptively unobtrusive simplicity, are a distillation from experience and thought that are profound and important.

Mr. Sullivan is concerned, as he says, "with Beethoven's music solely as a record of his spiritual development. I believe that in his greatest music Beethoven was primarily concerned to express his personal vision of life. . . . The development and transformation of Beethoven's attitude toward life, the result of certain root experiences, can, I believe, be traced in his music." Thus—to skip the detailed correlation which is the larger part of the book—he finds that Beethoven's music differs from all other music, including Bach's and Wagner's, in that it shows organic development to the very end; and he ascribes this to the fact that Beethoven's spiritual attitude grew itself to his final realization of "suffering as one of the great structural lines of human life." A religious attitude like that of Bach, and surely such an attitude as Wagner's, may with time

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"achieve greater richness and subtlety, but they are incapable of organic growth." But Bach and Wagner are the rule among artists, Beethoven the exception; and this alone gives him philosophical importance. And, while there are a few other examples, "perhaps even Shakespeare never reached that final stage of illumination that is expressed in some of Beethoven's late music." Hence "it is possible that Beethoven's late music is unique, not only in music but in the whole of art."

From this it is clear that when Mr. Sullivan speaks of Beethoven having philosophical importance he means all he says. He believes, as Beethoven did, that in communicating a vision of life his music communicates a genuine knowledge of reality. And this belief leads Mr. Sullivan to the general question whether art ranks with science and philosophy in communicating such knowledge. The prevailing belief until now has been that it does not. But this belief, Mr. Sullivan points out, is only a necessary consequence of another, the materialist, mathematical conception of the universe introduced by modern science, which has conditioned all other mental activity so completely that he calls it the mental climate of the last three hundred years. According to this conception reality can and must be expressed completely in terms of such elements as space, time, mass, and force, which can be defined and handled mathematically; and naturally if one starts with the belief that only certain perceptions are perceptions of reality, then one is bound to deny that others which appear to be are, in fact, perceptions of reality. But the mathematical conception of the universe was never a necessary one; it represented a choice justified subsequently by the fact that the elements ignored by science happened not to come in to disturb it, so that science could form "a coherent and closed system which is surely a presumption against the existence of what it ignores."* And now, in fact, "the fundamental concepts hitherto employed by science have been shown to be both unnecessary and insufficient. They are in process of being replaced by a different set, and it is perfectly possible that, when the replacement is complete, values [such as are conveyed by the artist] will be established as inherent in reality." This means that if a composition impresses one as an authentic communication of reality one is no longer obliged to deny the impression or explain it away. It means no more; it does not confirm the impression; nor does Mr. Sullivan claim that it does. He has cited recent developments in science only to remove the obstacle in the way of accepting the conclusive testimony of impressions like his own of such music as Beethoven's. (It should be noted that even if this impression is confirmed beyond doubt, all that will be affected is the status of the music as a cultural product; the music itself is completely accounted for by Beethoven's own belief which was independent of any confirmation, as is the listener's impression.)

I do not disagree with Mr. Sullivan if I point out that the illuminating of the universe by music may be only its indirect effect. Often the universe is illuminated by one's exhilaration, for example, the mere exhilaration produced by alcohol; often such exhilaration accompanies one's appreciation of something accomplished, of a dance with an intricate pattern, for example; and obviously it may accompany one's appreciation of the patterns in a drama, a mathematical demonstration or a piece of music. One follows musical themes as they go through their experiences and come out of them; their restatement after this manipulation has the effect of a summing-up of all that has happened; and at the end one feels as though one had been through analogous experiences oneself and reached some conclusion about them.

B. H. Haggin

* "Recent analysis has resolved the paradox created by the fact that science forms a closed system. It has been shown that it does so in virtue of the fact that physics (the science on which the materialist outlook was based) deals with but one aspect of reality, namely, its structure, and remains perpetually within its own domain by the device of cyclic definition."

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The Modern Mood

The Set-Up. By Joseph Moncure March. Covici-Friede. $2.
Nursery Rhymes for Children of Darkness. By Gladys Oaks. Robert McBride and Company. $2.50.

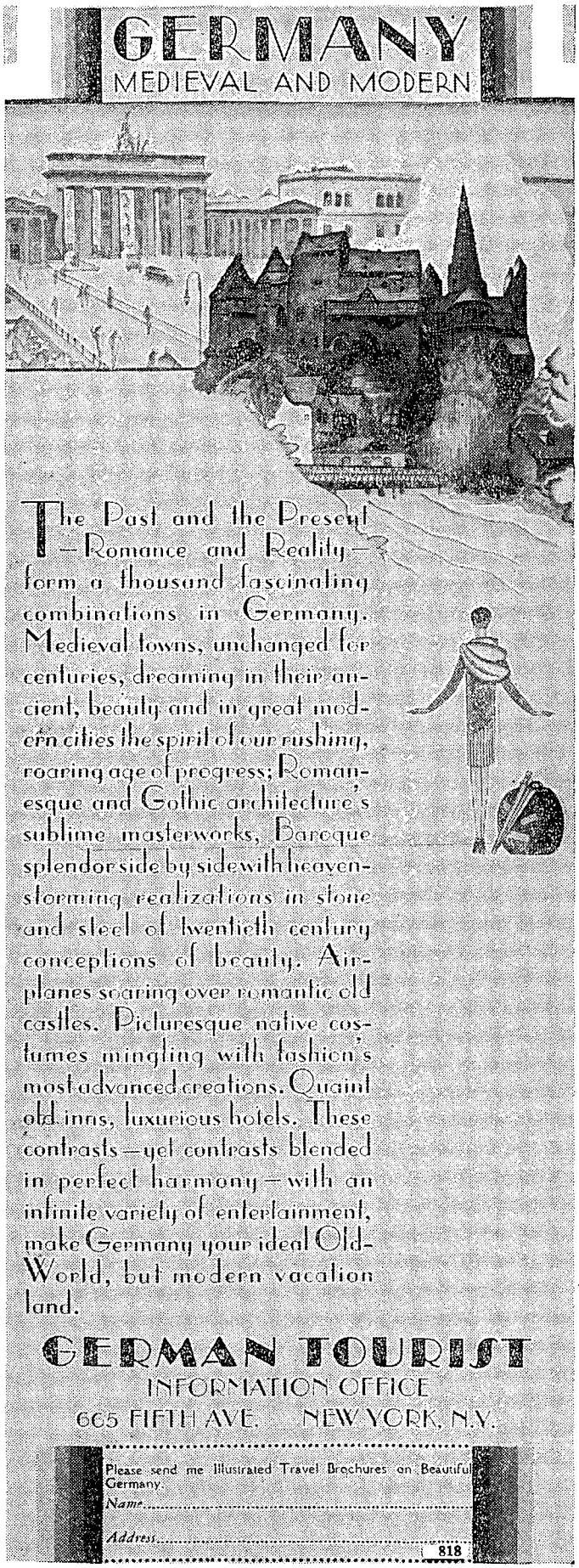
WHEN "Fifty Grand" was published in the *Atlantic Monthly,* Joseph March said: "Damn that man, Hemingway; he has made it impossible to write a story of the ring." But now Mr. March has done the impossible and, so far as story is concerned, has done it well. Taking again the double-crossed prize-fight as a theme, he has produced a dramatic narrative of sustained suspense and interesting detail which owes less to Ernest Hemingway for plot than for the curt cynicism with which the tale it told. And, as in Mr. Hemingway's work, this cynicism, however justified by the facts, destroys its artistic ends. It admits no worthy hero; it permits the reader no emotional attachment to the characters and no deep concern for the outcome of the story. The central character, a simple-minded brute, sold to slaughter for a paltry sum, is pitiful rather than tragic; the villians are not even evil, just contemptible. The figures in the background are equally besmirched, so that the whole, like Mr. March's first work, "The Wild Party," is an exercise in defilement—more significant as psychosis than as story or poetry.

As poetry "The Set-Up" leaves much undone. No one can read these lines without realizing that fundamentally Mr. March has the gift of poesy. His verse is alive; moreover, here and there it displays that uncanny economy which is the essence of great poetry. On the other hand, the bulk of the descriptive passages show that the author has worked without much care. His facile rhyming is achieved at a great sacrifice of verbal fitness so that much of its movement is more apparent than real. This carelessness and the crudities and solecisms of the poem are perhaps remediable but there is in his verse a fundamental lowness which Mr. March may find it more difficult to overcome. If consciously inserted, it is an ugly affectation and if unconsciously written, a vulgar insensitivity that will prevent greater achievements than "The Set-Up."

Mr. March carries this tone throughout the poem, differentiating not at all between his own words and those of his characters. There are numerous passages which merit the word obscene in its original derivative meaning rather than in any prudish sense. They cannot be excused as realism and they have no relation to poetry. I am told this is the modern mood. Certainly such elemental vulgarity is as characteristic of the intellectual modernist as of the now-fashionable mucker. Drama, fiction, and poetry flaunt their filth as marks of worldly wisdom.

Miss Oaks, whose versification is incomparably more polished and refined than that of Mr. March, partakes in this modernity. She who can raise some poems to the ecstatic pitch of Shelley and Keats finds "godhead too in commonness" and proves that she does in the lines which follow. The reader, however, need not be a prude to recoil from her lusty excesses which outdo the Elizabethans and the Biblical writers in directness of description. But a consideration of her work must go beyond one unfortunate mood or mannerism. It must take cognizance of the fact that four of her so-called religious poems—her phallic-religious poems, one may say—are unique in American poetry, barely foreshadowed in Whitman. And I do not believe anything finer of this type has been written since Verlaine or Thompson. The rest varies from good, craftsmanlike lyrics down to the ambitious bulk of commonplace verse that is the millstone of every American poet. However, a sureness of treatment and a maturity of conception mark even the trivialities and the modernistic vagaries with an authentic poetic seal.

JOHAN SMERTENKO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Biographies in Brief

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Mr. Bishop's portrait gallery, "from Elagabalus, the Waggish Emperor, to Mr. Professor Porson, the Tippling Philologer," is far more interesting than the majority of such collections, since none of his subjects has hitherto sat for a modern biographical painting. Not that Mr. Bishop is ultra-modern, for his style often has a cool lucidity that is rare in these journalistic days; but it is also frequently marred by a preciosity that smacks too obviously of the grotesqueries which characterized the subjects it delineates.

The Sword of State: Wellington after Waterloo. By Susan Buchan. Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.

Although the Duke of Wellington's great-great-niece modestly disclaims any scholarly designs in her amiable chit-chat about him, she does not always resist the temptation to point a few morals and adorn a few tales. But the chatter and the stories are interesting and occasionally informative.

The Book of Rabelais. By Jake Falstaff. Illustrated by Guy Arnoux. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $5.

Like Klabund's "Peter the Czar," this book is composed of staccato fragments—fragments that are now reminiscent of the Olympian sententiousness of Ecclesiastes, and now of the lusty rhetorical extravagance of "Gargantua" and "Pantagruel." No attempt is made to construct a straightforward narrative after the methodology of the customary factual or fictional biography. By presenting a series of kaleidoscopic pictures, by emitting lightning flashes of plangent prose, the author reveals the belching joviality, the magnificent bawdiness, the divine earthliness of Rabelais. This is no common biography. It is uneven, it is overdone, it sometimes flounders and sprawls; but it nevertheless bears here and there the unmistakable marks of something that approaches genius.

Helldorado. By William M. Breakenridge. Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.

The Bad Men of the West have had so many biographical innings of late that it seems only fair for one of the pioneer defenders of law and order to get into the game. Sheriff Breakenridge of Tucson, Arizona, tells the story of a staunch and fearless life, packed with rumors of alarms and genuine dangers, without employing factitious devices to trump up interest. When it was necessary to "get his man," he did so with no fuss and feathers; and as he did, so he writes. Hence the story of his life is simple, sincere, and at the same time genuinely exciting.

Great Short Biographies of the World. By Barrett H. Clark. Robert M. McBride and Company. $5.

No one realizes better than Mr. Clark himself the impossibility of making a perfect selection of brief biographies that can be compassed within one volume, even though it contains over 700,000 words. The chief consideration was not what must be selected, but what must on no account be excluded; and while one may wish to quarrel with him about this or that choice, one cannot deny that this compilation, considered merely as a pioneer, is valuable. Here, within a single book, one may at least taste the best biographical productions of all Occidental civilizations from the time of the Greeks, the Latins, and the Medievalists up to and including the present day; and one could not previously do that without ransacking many library shelves.

R. F. D.

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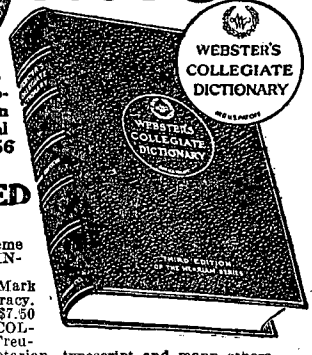

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Other Briefs

South Carolina Ballads, with a Study of the Traditional Ballad Today. Collected and Edited by Reed Smith. Harvard University Press. $3.

The core of this volume consists of fourteen traditional ballads and two folk-songs collected in South Carolina. In all Mr. Smith records forty-three variants of these ballads and furnishes tunes for twelve of them. He has edited his materials with admirable care and simplicity and with full references to Child's great work and to the publications of Olive D. Campbell, C. J. Sharp, J. H. Cox, Louise Pound, and other collectors and students. In an appendix he gives a list of all ballads surviving in the United States and Canada. Eight brief, pleasantly written chapters serve as an introduction not only to Mr. Smith's own work but to the whole subject of contemporary balladry. The one fault to find with the author is that he looks rather too favorably upon the theory of communal origins. Communal composition is, of course, a fact, but it requires a rare faith to believe that communal composition, under any circumstances conceivable, could have produced the ancient Scottish ballads. Mr. Smith states the objections to the theory so fairly, however, and defends it so weakly that an anti-communalist can only wish his work a wide circulation. He has, indeed, produced a capital book.

The Book of Earths. By Edna Kenton. William Morrow and Company. $6.

A friendly and fascinating canvass of theories concerning the shape of the earth—that body which we stand on yet cannot see. The story begins very far back, and many fantastic notions are passed in review. But Miss Kenton treats all the theories, including ours that the earth is an oblate spheroid, as guesses; and so is as much interested in certain nineteenth-century notions that we inhabit a tetrahedron and a hollow sphere as she is in any dogma taught in our schools. Her discussion is lively and sensible, and 148 illustrations add greatly to the value of the volume.

The Confusion of Tongues. By Charles W. Ferguson. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.50.

This volume offers an unfailingly amusing and reasonably thorough account of the numerous religious cults that flourish more or less successfully in America today. Russellism, Buckmanism, Ku Kluxism, the Dukhobors, the House of David—the incredibly bizarre tenets and gaudy deeds of these and other sects are starkly and yet not too caustically revealed in a book that is far more "instructive and entertaining" than the average run of the press.

Evangelized America. By Grover C. Loud. Lincoln Macveagh: the Dial Press. $4.

Written by a newspaperman, this book is an unusually readable and yet thorough history of evangelism, from the days of Jonathan Edwards to Billy Sunday. Notwithstanding his flippancy in dealing with the hilarious mountebanks of the profession, Mr. Loud respects humility, reverence, and sincerity, whenever he is fortunate enough to find these traits in his characters.

The Reinterpretation of American Literature. Some Contributions toward the Understanding of Its Historical Development. Edited by Norman Foerster. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

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volume aims at "a fresher, more thoughtful, more purposeful approach to the understanding of our literature." The contributions of Howard Mumford Jones on The European Background, Kenneth B. Murdock on The Puritan Tradition, V. L. Parrington on The Development of Realism, and A. M. Schlesinger on American History and American Literary History are indeed fresh and thoughtful, and therefore good. The other five essays are perhaps too purposeful. But the book as a whole will prove suggestive to any student of American letters.

Poetry of the Orient. An Anthology of the Classic Secular Poetry of the Major Eastern Nations. Edited by Eunice Tietjens. Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

Lute and Scimitar. Being Poems and Ballads of Central Asia translated out of the Afghan, the Persian, the Turkoman, the Tarantchi, the Bokharan, the Balochi, and the Tartar Tongues by Achmed Abdullah. With a preface by Hervey Allen. Payson and Clarke. $2.50.

Mrs. Tietjens, with perhaps a surplus of apparatus, has admirably represented the secular poetries of China, Japan, India, Arabia, and Persia in so far as they are accessible in the translations of Arthur Waley, Florence Ayscough, R. A. Nicholson, Gertrude Bell, Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, and many others. There was need for such an anthology, and the need has been met. Mr. Abdullah, leaving the beaten classic path for the wilder trails across Central Asia, brings home wilder game in the form of fierce poems about love and war, translated here by his own not too happy hand. At least, though the collection is interesting, it does not as it stands justify the extravagant claims he makes for it in his introduction and notes.

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Music in London—II

THERE is a small, intelligent audience in New York, too; but in London it has far more influence. It is certainly a minority at symphony concerts, yet the programs of the London Symphony, Royal Philharmonic, and British Broadcasting Corporation concerts are vastly more enterprising and interesting than ours. I could fill a column with the names of valuable works which we don't hear and which are being played in London this winter.

The enterprise of the British Broadcasting Corporation in particular is astounding to an American who remembers the timidity of American broadcasting stations. It gives a regular series of symphony concerts which it broadcasts, and of which the programs are as representative of all music as the conductors will only make them. It also broadcasts concerts of chamber music in which modern and contemporary composers are well represented. And it supports the summer Promenade concerts, for which Sir Henry Wood devises programs that range from all-Bach (including Sir Henry's abominable transcriptions) to indiscriminating mixtures of all styles, and include a great deal of music by English composers.

There is a lesson for certain Americans in the fact that performing English music has not improved its quality (the only good reason advanced for the practice), but has only encouraged the composers to write more of the same awful stuff. And when I say awful stuff I mean not only the music of the youngsters that is performed in the summer, but the music of the hardy perennials that is performed in the winter—music which represents only a technical facility that is appalling since it serves musical imaginations that are no less appalling. There is too much of the amateur spirit in this matter; it causes amateurish stuff to be written, and to be tolerated by the professionals. Mere ability to put notes together commands too much respect; it causes a Wallace to be treated seriously and an Elgar to be considered a great composer by critics who know enough to recognize the occasional power of Vaughan Williams and the authentic quality of Delius.

The notion, also, of some Americans that the quality of programs has anything to do with the permanency of conductors is exploded by the programs of the London orchestras. The conductor changes at every concert, yet most of the programs are excellent; and it is the permanent Hallé Orchestra under its permanent conductor, Sir Hamilton Harty, that plays a program consisting of Schubert's Unfinished, Beethoven's Seventh, and Brahms's Fourth. That is what the Germans play, too, in London as everywhere.

Like Americans the English attribute a false significance to the permanent orchestra: its presence does not make America a musical nation, its absence does not make England an unmusical one. And, like us, they overestimate its importance. It is true that the permanent Berlin Philharmonic plays superbly under Furtwängler; but when the permanent Hallé Orchestra of Manchester plays under Sir Hamilton Harty its performances have no virtue except discipline; and it is the impermanent London Symphony or British Broadcasting Corporation Orchestra under Sir Thomas Beecham which demonstrates that beauty in performance requires only a first-rate personnel under a first-rate conductor, though it requires at least these. Having heard Albert Coates, Sir Landon Ronald, and Sir Henry Wood, I am sure that the London Symphony plays poorly under them, but that it plays exactly as they conduct. The Londoner does not understand this at all: he will have it that a poor performance is due to lack of rehearsal rather than Sir Henry Wood's lack of sensitiveness; and all that I had read before I had an opportunity to hear for myself left me unprepared equally for the excellence of the orchestras and the poor quality of the conductors. The critical esteem these gentlemen enjoy is astonishing. When Sir Hamilton Harty wilfully mauls music about one might suppose from the reviews that the black eyes add to its beauty.

Such over-tolerance is certainly a fault in musical reviewing; but knowledge and intellectual distinction are virtues which English reviewing exhibits in greater quantity than our own. If one reads important London newspapers one does not strike the sort of thing that spreads itself in the New York *Times* or *World*. H. C. Colles of the London *Times* is as skilful a writer as he is a competent one—too subtle, in fact, to have impressed New York when he was there for a time. Ernest Newman of the Sunday *Times* (London) is decidedly more impressive; unfortunately, when he can't impress he won't play. Recently he demonstrated again the futility of theorists' rules by citing his stock example, a succession of notes which Ebenezer Prout calls bad, but with which Brahms opens his beautiful "Wie Melodien zieht es." But it is the difference in rhythm that makes Prout forbid in one case what he would unquestionably approve of in the other. When I pointed this out to Mr. Newman he did not answer. More important still: in his book, "The Unconscious Beethoven," he ascribes Beethoven's deafness to syphilis. This gave him smooth sailing in the *American Mercury*, among other lay periodicals; but in the *Musical Quarterly* Mr. Sonneck showed that the evidence did not warrant the conclusion. I was therefore surprised to see Mr. Newman complain in a recent article that when he had proved Beethoven had syphilis—which meant that he either had not seen Mr. Sonneck's review or had disposed of it—an American critic had objected that he was irreverent, which implied that this had been the only type of American objection. I wrote twice to ask him if he had read Mr. Sonneck's review; and received no answer. The trouble with Mr. Newman today is that he has become "The Self-Conscious Newman," conscious of his deserved reputation as a brilliant writer and critic.

B. H. Haggin

Drama

On Dramatization

"SERENA BLANDISH; or The Difficulty of Getting Married" (Morosco Theater) is one of the more amusing comedies of the season and it is hardly the fault of the adapter, S. N. Behrman, if it is by no means as good as the novelette from which it is taken. All dramatizations are, without any exception, more or less unsatisfactory, but when they are made from any piece of fiction whose effect depends upon the style of the narrative then they are doubly so; for if the action and the dialogue are extracted from the tissue of words which envelops them they lose half their character and no longer mean what once they did.

Serena, as will be remembered by all who read the elegant account of her adventures, was a charming young girl without the talent for success. Though marriage was the only career open to her and though, to tell the truth, she desired no other, marriage always eluded her. She had countless proposals but none of them were honorable, and even her lovers, however generous they might be to other young ladies, never gave anything to her except their gratitude. She was, as she ruefully confessed, charming rather than expensive and, since she had never been either led to the altar or presented with diamonds, no admirer could ever be brought to see why he should violate an established tradition.

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From the South American countess who adopted her and from that lady's wise major-domo she received the very best advice. She even digested what they told her and recognized the error in her tactics. But her amiability never failed to set her wisdom at naught. When, for example, she went to have lunch in the rooms of a bachelor lord she stayed (with appropriate interludes) until tea time even though she knew as well as the major-domo himself that this was no way to go about the serious business of catching a husband. Yet she did not do so because she was particularly inflammable, for that indeed she was not. It was only (if I correctly remember the phraseology of a four-year-old novel) "because she could never bring herself to deny what an attractive young man desired, though she often wondered how they could ask so much." Men, so Serena discovered, are more likely to marry women because they are obdurate than because they are amiable, and obdurate she never could be.

Now obviously such a tale belongs in a realm of its own. The irony of its double-edged moral and the grave extravagance of its situations require an appropriate style of narration which the author achieved by slightly burlesquing the manner of the eighteenth-century conte. The graceful rotundities of his style not only contrasted delightfully with the impudence of his thoughts but also suggested immediately the period to which worldly wisdom of this sort belongs. But in the theater when the curtain rises upon conventionally realistic people in a conventional setting the visual appearances cannot speak to us as the style of the original author spoke. The characters begin to talk in sentences which seem only somewhat unreal, and though one gets many flashes of wit, especially when some bit of the story's dialogue is directly transplantable, one never gets the sense of a perfect or consistent whole. The atmosphere, the mood, the artificial world in which the events take place—these things are never made to exist upon the stage as they existed upon the printed page, and one feels, accordingly, that one has never quite caught the spirit of the piece.

The fault lies no more with Miss Ruth Gordon, whose eager and pathetic little personality exactly suits the role of the unfortunate Serena, than it does with the adapter. It lies rather with the technique of the stage itself as this last is exemplified in the theater of today. Dialogue may, of course, be written in any one of various styles. Settings may be built and actors may be made to act in fashions appropriate to various kinds of drama. But there is still no way of reproducing upon the stage the effect which certain writers get by their individual way of telling a story. There is no dramatic equivalent for the cadence of a phrase and there is no way of making an actor look like certain descriptions of certain characters for the reasons that the conception which we are given of them is not visual at all and that they do not exist aside from the words which are used concerning them. Serena is not merely a person who says and does certain things. She is also a person whose career is told about in a certain way, and she becomes something not so much different as merely less when she appears to us through any medium other than that through which she appeared to her creator.

This does not mean, of course, that the theater is in all respects more limited than the novel, but it does mean that it cannot always do what a given novel does, and it is too bad that the fact is not more often recognized by those who attempt to put novels on the stage. Mr. Behrman, as he demonstrated in "The Second Man," has a style of his own. It is far better than that which he has achieved by attempting to translate the essentially untranslatable.

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